

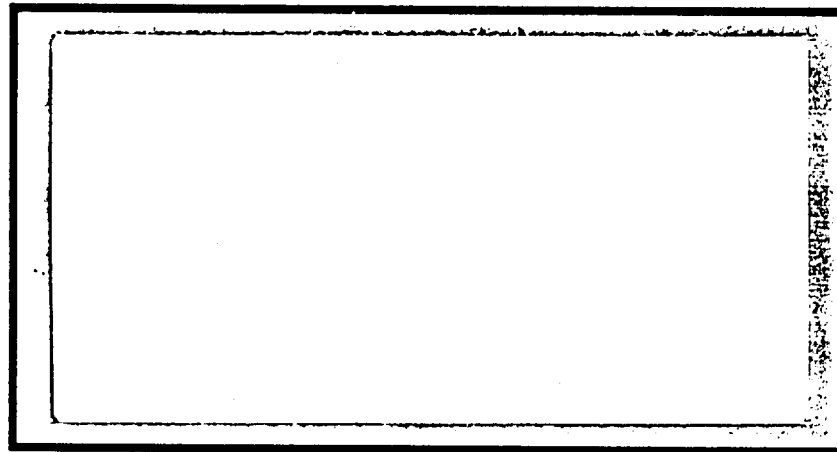
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POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF RELOCATION
DECISIONS ON RETENTION OF
AIR FORCE DUAL-OFFICER COUPLES

THESIS

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AFIT/GSM/LSR/88S-8

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POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF RELOCATION
DECISIONS ON RETENTION OF
AIR FORCE DUAL-OFFICER COUPLES

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the School of Systems and
Logistics of the Air Force Institute of Technology
Air University
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Systems Management

Carol P. Freniere, B.S.
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September 1988

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Guy Shane, for his many helpful suggestions. I am also grateful to the AFIT librarians for their efforts in locating documents, always in a friendly and cooperative manner.

Carol P. Freniere

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Abstract

This study investigated the predicted career decisions of Air Force dual-officer couples when faced with family separation. The number of officer couples has risen dramatically in recent years and is expected to continue to rise. As such, the Air Force must be concerned with the affect of join-spouse policies on the retention of these couples. Career decisions were explored in terms of the following variables: sex and parental status of the respondent, length of family separation, and desirability of Air Force job offers.

The measurement instrument used was the Rapid Access Personnel Survey on Join Spouse Matters, a 38 question survey conducted by Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center in January 1985. The population of interest consisted of all active duty Air Force captains and lieutenants, with spouses in the same categories. Frequencies of responses to biographical survey questions were used to compile descriptive information. Chi-square tests of independence were used to determine the relationship of sex and parental status to hypothetical relocation decisions.

Results reveal a group of junior officers who have been successful with join-spouse assignments and express a high degree of career commitment. However, they also show a high degree of family commitment and are willing to accept very little family separation during their careers. In those cases in which family separation is necessary, length of separation and job desirability seem to influence retention decisions. In all scenarios presented, the decision of whether or not to leave the Air Force is independent of sex. In seven out of the eight scenarios, the decision is independent of parental status.

Based on the results, it was recommended that the Air Force continue its current emphasis on family issues (including those pertaining to military couples). It was also recommended that family separation be minimized and job desirability maximized when couples must be separated. Finally, recommendations were made for further research involving the attitudes of dual-military couples.

POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF RELOCATION DECISIONS ON RETENTION OF DUAL-MILITARY OFFICER COUPLES

I. Introduction

General Issue

The dual-career couple has become increasingly prevalent in the American workforce in recent years, primarily as a result of the significant increase in the number of working women. This trend has extended into the military services, resulting in rapidly increasing numbers of dual-military couples. For purposes of this study, "dual-career" is defined as the situation in which each married partner actively pursues a profession requiring special qualifications and involving advancement within an organization (Beeson, 1985, p.92). Dual-officer couples, in this thesis, are limited to Air Force marriages in which both members are active duty officers.

The dual-officer couple typifies the departure from the traditional Air Force family, one in which men and women have separate roles - the man as the breadwinner and the woman as homemaker and dominant parent. Non-traditional family types exhibit a sharing of both professional and domestic responsibilities, as well as joint decision-making in career questions. Partly in

response to this trend, the Air Force Conference on Families was convened in September 1980 with four themes in mind. One of these themes was "diversity of families," evidence of the Air Force's perceived need to examine family policies in light of the changing trends. One of many Conference conclusions was the following:

"Assumptions of husband-wife independence and a husband's right to unilaterally make decisions for his family are not appropriate today in many Air Force families" (AF Conf, 1980, p.48).

In terms of numbers, the Conference described Air Force married couples as a "significant and still growing part of the Air Force family population" (AF Conf, 1980, p.4). In this context, married couples included both officer and enlisted personnel, with enlisted couples making up a large percentage of the group. In January 1985, at the time data were collected for this study, there were 20,477 Air Force couples, 2,668 (13%) of these being officer-officer couples (Pellum, 1985; Harrington, 1985, p.4). The total number of couples represented more than a doubling of the number in 1975, from a base of almost no couples in 1967 (Harrington, 1985, p.4). The increases are closely tied to the number of active duty women, which has more than doubled since 1975, and is expected to continue to rise. For the officer corps in particular, two factors are significant contributors to

the increasing numbers: women have been permitted to attend the Air Force Academy since 1976, and the Air Force has opened all but a handful of its non-combat career fields to women officers in recent years (Orr, 1985, pp.86,87).

Dual-career couples face many obstacles unique to their preferred non-traditional family type. Among these are the pressures for each partner to relocate for career advancement, the stress involved with juggling two careers and a marriage, child-care concerns, and social or corporate pressures from traditionalists (Williams, 1978, p.103). This thesis focuses specifically on the impacts of forced relocation when family separation is involved. Although the relocation issue is often listed as one of many concerns of dual-career couples, it may be the most significant concern of dual-officer couples. Civilian couples, when faced with relocation decisions, have several options (assuming they do not wish to divorce): turn down the offer; accept the offer, relocate the family, and hope that the spouse finds a suitable position; accept the offer and relocate without taking the family, or work out some sort of creative compromise with the employer. More and more couples are turning down career advancement offers requiring relocation if these offers will result in family separation or in one partner making a career sacrifice. Some couples are willing to

sacrifice career advancement for the sake of family integrity. These couples see the family/career decision as an either/or decision - they are typically couples with children who feel that career advancement is less important than keeping the family together (Hall and Hall, 1979, pp.192-205).

Dual-officer couples are obviously more constrained in relocation decisions than are civilian couples. A couple in which both members are obligated by an active duty service commitment (again, assuming they do not want to divorce) may have no alternative to family separation. Couples not bound by service commitments may opt for one or both partners to leave the service, but typically do not have the opportunity to work out creative compromises with their employer as do civilian couples. Air Force policies regarding assignment of dual-officer couples (referred to as join-spouse assignments) are supportive in a general sense. The Air Force attempts to jointly relocate couples "when it is both possible and in the best interest of the Air Force", but cautions that military couples should "expect periods of separation during their military careers" (AFR 36-20, 1985, p.231). To date, it appears that join-spouse procedures have been successful. Although accurate statistics are not maintained, figures of 85% to 90% for rates of togetherness have been reported, and few couples interviewed have had any lengthy

separations (Harrington, 1985, p.1; Griffith, Doering and Mahoney, 1986, p.126; Williams, 1978, pp.107,108). Air Force leaders are concerned about continued success in future years, because of the increasing numbers and the changing composition of the dual-military population. A large majority of dual-military couples are lieutenants and captains who still have a good deal of flexibility in career choices. Additionally, young couples just beginning marriages and careers are more willing to work out compromises necessary in dual-career families than are couples who have established careers. As the large group of junior officers progresses into the field grade ranks, personnel managers will find it much more difficult to make joint assignments and satisfy individual career requirements. A second factor contributing to more difficulties in the join-spouse program is the variety of career fields now held by women officers. According to former Secretary of the Air Force, Verne Orr:

The complications for our personnel system are evident. Imagine, for example, the woman KC-135 pilot at Plattsburg AFB, N.Y., who marries an FB-111 pilot. When reassignment time comes, she has a selection of twenty-four bases where KC-135s fly; he is fairly well limited to Plattsburgh AFB or Pease AFB, N.H. . . . Trying to coordinate assignments for two Air Force people, often with different specialties and base possibilities, is complex and gets more so as those couples gain in seniority [Orr, 1985, p.89].

It is unclear how retention of join-spouse couples is currently affected by join-spouse procedures. Accurate

retention figures for couples are not maintained, and retention studies in the past have not singled out dual-officer couples because the numbers are only now becoming significant enough to warrant special attention. It is clear, however, that in a volunteer force Air Force leaders must be responsive to retention rates of any personnel categories which will potentially be significant contributors to that force. Retention of trained, qualified personnel has always been a high-priority item for Air Force leaders. It will become increasingly important in the next several years as the number of eligible young recruits declines in the American workforce, and the military is forced to compete with the civilian sector more than ever before.

In order to maximize retention, it is essential that the Air Force update policies as necessary to reflect the changing composition of its personnel. The first step, however, is to understand the factors contributing to retention decisions. This study will investigate factors contributing to retention decisions of dual-officer couples, specifically those factors pertaining to relocation policies.

Problem Statement

How is potential retainability of dual-officer couples affected by career enhancement versus family

integrity decisions? How are such decisions related to sex and to parental status?

Investigative Questions

In order to maximize retention of dual-officer couples, Air Force leaders must understand the attitudes of these couples toward current policies. Responses to the following types of questions will provide insight into this area:

1. When faced with the possibility of family separation, how would retention decisions of dual-officer couples be influenced?
2. How are such decisions affected by career enhancement factors (e.g., one or the other spouse must make career sacrifices to maintain family integrity)?
3. How does the length of separation affect such decisions?
4. How are such decisions related to sex of the individuals? Does one spouse's career appear to be dominant over the other spouse's in terms of relocation decisions?
5. How are such decisions related to parental status?

Summary

This chapter presented a brief discussion of the recent increase in dual-career couples in the work force,

including active duty Air Force dual-officer couples. Current Air Force relocation policies concerning these couples were discussed. It was concluded that the Air Force must understand potential retention impacts of these policies in order to update policies as necessary, thereby maximizing retention.

The remainder of this thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter II will consist of a review of the literature pertaining to dual-career couples, specifically with respect to the impact of forced relocation. The methodology to be used will be covered in Chapter III, and the results of the data analysis in Chapter IV. Chapter V will consist of conclusions and recommendations for further research.

II. Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of the literature pertaining to dual-career couples. Specific areas of discussion include the dual-military subset of dual-career couples, the issue of forced relocation, the degree of role conflict experienced by males and females in these marriages, current employer responses to the dual-career issue in the civilian sector, and implications for Air Force leaders in terms of retention.

Dual-Career Couples

The dual-career marriage is one in which both the husband and wife actively pursue career goals, possess unique qualifications, and work toward advancement within a profession or organization. This is distinct from a dual-earner (or dual-income) marriage, in which one or both of the spouses holds a job but does not necessarily pursue a career (Beeson, 1985, p.92). Frequently in the literature there is no distinction made between these categories. Therefore, much of this discussion will pertain to all dual-income couples. The term "dual-career" will be used only when a clear distinction has been made in the literature.

The recent increase in dual-career couples results primarily from increases in the number of working women. Between 1947 and 1980 the number of working women increased by 173%, while the number of men increased by 43%. The total number of working men remains higher but the rate of participation for women has risen dramatically while the rate for men has declined (Bianchi and Spain, 1983, pp.17-18). Factors which have contributed to the high rate of participation for women include the following: delays in having children, continued employment during pregnancy and early childhood years, and an increased number of women returning to work after raising children. From 1970 to 1981, the percent of working women with children under six years of age increased from 30% to 48%, with a figure of 55% projected for 1990 (Statuto, 1984, p.18). In conjunction with the increasing number of women entering the workforce, the institution of marriage has remained popular among the general population. In 1980, over 90% of women and over 85% of men over age 30 had been married at least once (Bianchi and Spain, 1983, pp.1-4). There have been changes in the timing (first marriages are typically at a later age than they were 40 years ago) and duration (divorces have become more prevalent) of marriages, but apparently not in the attractiveness of the lifestyle (Bianchi and Spain, 1983, pp.1-4). The combination of

high rates of working women and high marital rates has resulted in a dramatic increase in dual-income and dual-career marriages.

Dual-career couples experience several concerns not typically faced by more traditional couples. As discussed in the previous chapter, strictly traditional couples are those in which the man and woman have clearly defined roles as breadwinner and homemaker/dominant parent. Dual-career couples tend more toward non-traditional values, with other dual-income couples falling somewhere between strictly traditional and strictly non-traditional. In general terms, a few common dilemmas or stress areas have been associated with the dual-career lifestyle. Overload dilemmas result from the demands placed on both spouses by career and domestic tasks (including child care as well as household tasks), and are often lessened with systems of outside domestic help. A second area of stress results from the discrepancy between social norms (e.g., traditional male and female roles) and the personal norms exhibited in dual-career couples. Social network dilemmas come about because dual-career couples are typically not in a position to make or maintain as many active social relationships as are traditional couples. In fact, they often limit friendships to other dual-career couples. A final dilemma, the role cycling dilemma, results from the conflicting demands of career and family roles as well as

the conflicting demands of each spouse's career (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1969, pp.8-23).

The practical problems involved in combining two careers and a family, as well as the psychological stresses discussed above, lead to controversy over whether or not there will indeed be a dramatic increase in dual-career couples. There are several arguments against the common philosophy that the dual-career lifestyle is becoming prevalent. For example, the literature indicates that there has been relatively little movement away from traditional roles in the home. Women are still expected to handle most of the household and child-care responsibilities, whether or not they are pursuing a career. Since family values are generally regarded as very important, women may be more likely to sacrifice either career or family rather than combine the two in a less than satisfactory manner (Hunt and Hunt, 1982, pp.41-57). A counter to this argument contends that family life is not necessarily unsatisfactory, and that dual-career families may actually be stronger and closer than others (Madani and Cooper, 1977, p.492).

In addition to family-oriented problems, the dual-career lifestyle may also be hindered by career limitations. The career market has become highly competitive in terms of the standards on which hiring of professionals is based and the sacrifices many

professionals are willing to make in order to advance. An individual who is attempting to mix household and child-care responsibilities with a career may be unable to successfully compete with an individual who can depend on a spouse to handle those same responsibilities (Hunt and Hunt, 1977, pp.410,411). Hand-in-hand with this opinion is the belief that organizations will not be forced to become more responsive to the needs of dual-career couples since they have available to them an abundance of workers willing to make sacrifices (Hunt and Hunt, 1982, pp.41-57). A more common opinion is that organizations will not have this luxury of choice and will have to tailor policies in order to attract dual-career couples (Hall and Hall, 1978, p.58; Newgren, Kellogg and Gardner, 1987, p.4; Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, p.470).

In summary, the number of dual-career couples has been on the rise in recent years. There are unique problems associated with this type of lifestyle, leading to debate over whether or not the number will continue to increase. One opinion is that more and more couples will choose this lifestyle as it becomes more socially acceptable (Rapoport and Rapoport, 1977, pp.20,21). A less common belief is that dual-career couples face many difficult obstacles and will therefore remain a relatively small component in the workforce (Hunt and Hunt, 1982, pp.41-57).

Dual-Military Couples

Not unexpectedly, the number of dual-career couples has also increased within the Air Force (both military-civilian and military-military couples). Just as in the private sector, the increase is a function of high numbers of marriages and of working women. During the 1970's the Air Force population changed from predominantly single to predominantly married (AF Conf, 1980, pp.iii-iv). During the same period, the percentage of employed military wives increased to a point where it equaled that of employed civilian wives for the first time (Grossman, 1981, p.60). Within the dual-military population (Air Force only) the number of couples more than doubled between 1978 and 1985 (Harrington, 1985, p. 4). Although the total represents less than 10% of the Air Force population (AF Conf, 1980, p.4), the dramatic increase in recent years is cause for concern by personnel managers (Harrington, 1985, p.1).

The largest percentage of dual-military couples are enlisted couples (approximately 89%), followed by officer couples (approximately 7%), and then by mixed couples (4%) (Carr, Orthner and Brown, 1980, p.80). Dual-military couples are less likely than other Air Force couples to have children (AF Conf, 1980, p.4; Baldwin, 1986, p.33; Carr and others, 1980, p.80), with over half of the officer couples having no children (Baldwin, 1986, p.33).

Those who do have children are equally likely to have the father or the mother care for the children in the case of separation, unlike more traditional couples (Carr and others, 1980, p.80). Most couples have been fairly successful in avoiding long-term separations due to relocation: one study shows a 95% success rate in relocating enlisted couples to the same location within one year of each other (Harrington, 1985, p.78), while another study reports a togetherness rate of 88% (Carr and others, 1980, p.80). Most dual-military couples are junior in rank - 76% of the officers involved have less than twelve years active duty time (Baldwin, 1986, p.32). Finally, dual-military couples seem to be concerned with personal growth and achievement and are less motivated than other groups by tangible benefits (medical, dental, retirement pay) (Baldwin, 1986, p.34).

Dual-military couples seem to be content with their lifestyles in spite of the obstacles they face. This may be partially due to the relative success with which they have received joint assignments, in addition to economic stability and mutual job fulfillment (AF Conf, 1980, p.46). Most couples claim to be satisfied with their ability to balance work and family commitments, but admit to being apprehensive about new assignments and about staying promotable while maintaining normal family lives (AF Conf, 1980, p.46; Williams, 1978, pp.107,108). All things

considered, military couples find their lifestyle to be exciting and rewarding and highly recommend it to others (Williams, 1978, pp.107, 108). This attitude is not shared by Army military couples, who are less willing than other Army couples to recommend the military lifestyle to others (Maze, 1988a, p.7). Two factors might help to explain this difference in attitudes: 1.) the survey from which the Army data were collected included both enlisted and officer personnel, and 2.) the Army has only a 70% success rate in assigning couples together, as compared to approximately 90% for the Air Force (Maze, 1988a, p.7).

The dual-military couple (along with other nontraditional family types) is a manifestation of the "occupational" model of military service as opposed to the traditional "institutional" model (McCubbin, Marsden, Dunning and Hunter, 1978, pp.46-50). Within the institutional model, the military member and his family are completely dedicated to the organization and are in turn taken care of by the military community. This model is based on several assumptions, including the following: the mission takes priority over family and personal needs, the wife's primary responsibility is to support her husband in his military job, family factors should not be considered in development of Air Force policies, nor should families question these policies. Within the occupational model the family and self take priority over

the organization, and several of these assumptions are challenged.

Within this model, such presently unquestioned realities of military service as forced family relocations, separations, financial hardships, and fluctuating benefits may well become negotiable contractual issues between employee service members and the employer organization [McCubbin and others, 1978, p. 47].

There is a strong perception among Air Force members and spouses of an unwritten "two-for-one" policy in which the spouse is expected to actively participate in her husband's career (at the expense of her own career). This policy, which is in line with the institutional model, has been the subject of considerable controversy in recent years. In September 1987, a Blue Ribbon Panel was established to look into spouse-related issues, including the conflict between career aspirations and participation in the Air Force community. Findings support the current trend toward the occupational model of military service (Dept of AF, 1988, pp.1-14).

A major finding of the Panel was the impact that pressure has on retention. Many members felt caught between the demands of their own families and those of the Air Force. When family priorities and organizational priorities come into conflict, members report they are more likely to give greater attention to their family situation and leave the service if necessary [Dept of AF, 1988, p.13].

The specific policies of interest to this study are those pertaining to relocation of dual-officer couples, and are described in Air Force Regulation 36-20. The Air Force (as well as the Army and the Navy) is generally

supportive of joint assignments but does not guarantee them (Williams, 1978, p.104). Joint assignments are permitted only when the mission of the Air Force can be satisfied by the assignments.

The mission of the Air Force requires total commitment from all its members and in order to achieve the force characterization of responsiveness and flexibility, the Air Force must have people in the right place at the right time. Regardless of their military couple status, each member is serving in his or her own right and must fulfill the obligation inherent to all Air Force members [AFR 36-20, 1985, p.231].

The procedure for application for joint assignment is based on completion of Air Force Form 1048, Military Spouse Information. Completion of this form results in each member's identification number being recorded on their spouse's record. When one member is selected for assignment, the spouse is automatically considered (within mission constraints) for assignment to the same location (AFR36-20, 1985, pp.231,232). As indicated previously, the success rate for joint assignments has been relatively high, but is expected to decrease as the numbers and the ranks of dual-military couples increase.

Relocation

Three trends are evident in the literature concerning relocation of dual-income couples: 1) there has been an increasing resistance to relocate for purposes of job advancement, partially due to family-related factors (one example being a spouse's employment), 2) theoretically in

a dual-career marriage, both careers are given equal consideration when making a relocation decision, and 3) in reality there is evidence that relocation decisions in dual-career couples are based almost exclusively on factors related to the husband's career (Duncan and Perucci, 1976, p.260; Long, 1974, p.346).

Historically, relocation has been a prerequisite for advancement within most organizations, usually unquestioned by employees. Today many people are choosing not to relocate because they do not consider the benefits to be worth the family sacrifices they may have to make (Hall and Hall, 1979, p.193). In a 1975 survey of 617 businesses, results revealed that 42% of the firms' employees had refused job offers in a new location during that year. This figure was ten times higher than that of the previous year (Costello, 1976, p.4). The most common reason given for refusal to move was family considerations, indicating that employees are more concerned today with quality of life concerns and less concerned with pay increases and promotions (relative to past employees) (Foegen, 1977, p.414). Mobility as a prerequisite for advancement is not necessarily valid anymore, and some corporations are beginning to recognize this. These corporations will be able to compete more successfully than others in a limited labor pool. In an abundant labor pool, however, employees may not have the

freedom to refuse relocation offers in consideration of family concerns. The influence of family considerations in relocation decisions is directly related to the supply and demand situation of workers in the particular career field involved (Sussman and Cogswell, 1971, p.485).

Decisions to relocate generally take into account four types of factors: job related conditions, environmental conditions associated with the new location, availability of desired facilities, and the potential impact of the move on the family. Recent changes in society, particularly the number of working women, have led to a more family-oriented decision making process. This is particularly significant for dual-career families, which are typically highly mobile, with decisions centered on how established each spouse is in his or her career field (Sussman and Cogswell, 1971, p.483). In theory, each spouse's career is weighted equally in the decision-making process. Dual-career couples, especially those under 30, typically claim that both careers are equal (Catalyst, 1981, pp.7-21). In one study involving 15 professional couples who had faced relocation decisions in their marriage, 12 of the couples stated that the husband's decision had been significantly influenced by the wife's career at least once. Over the long run, half of the couples reported treating each decision on a case-by-case basis in terms of which spouse's career took priority (Holmstrom, 1972, pp.34-37).

Such a situation, in which each career is given equal consideration, is highly unusual. In spite of claims of "equal careers" by dual-career couples, relocation decisions are based almost exclusively on the perceived benefits to the husband's career. In a study involving dual-income couples (with no distinction made concerning educational or career levels), the wife's employment tended to increase local mobility (within county) and to decrease long distance moving (interstate). The increase in short-distance moves may be attributable to the ability of the family to improve its housing situation because of the wife's income. With regard to the impact of long-distance moves on the wife's career, the following conclusion was drawn:

It would appear, therefore, that any geographical movement is unfavorable to the wife's continued participation in the labor force. And the greater the distance moved (at least up to a point), the greater the likelihood of her dropping out of the labor force [Long, 1974, p.346].

The author hypothesized that results might be different for a group limited to dual-career couples because of the wife's career motivation and her more significant contribution to family income. However, in a similar study limited to wives with college degrees, Long's conclusions were supported. The wife's employment had no significant impact on the amount of migration, and the existence of opportunities for her in other areas of the country did not affect the probability that the couple

would move. Several factors pertaining to the husband's career, on the other hand, were shown to significantly affect the rate of migration. These factors include the occupational prestige, the amount of demand to move in the career field, and the number of employment opportunities in other geographical areas (Duncan and Perrucci, 1976, p. 260). Even in those couples which can be categorized as dual-career, it appears that the wife typically makes career sacrifices (such as not working or accepting suboptimal job opportunities). One possible reason is that the wife is willing to sacrifice for the good of the family. Another possibility is the lack of opportunity for women because of the typical attitudes of their bosses. Managers may tend to put women in jobs that do not have stringent travel or relocation demands. "Perhaps as a result of this traditional view, only 5 to 10% of 100,000 employees who were transferred by the 600 largest U.S. companies in 1976 were women" (Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, p. 469).

Those dual-career couples who manage to avoid the traditional solution (in which the wife makes career sacrifices) do so through a variety of methods. These include compromise, alternating the dominant career, altering career goals, negotiating as a team, and presenting their employers with alternative solutions (Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, p.470). Another increasingly

popular option is for the couple to maintain separate households so that neither partner has to make career sacrifices. Historically, this type of living arrangement has been dictated by the husband's career. Recently, more of these arrangements have become female-determined, with wives showing a willingness to move without spouses or to stay behind. Couples in this situation typically view it as temporary and expect that future career changes will allow them to once again maintain a single household. In order to cope with the strains of this living arrangement, each partner must have high career motivation, the ability to cope with social pressures, and the means to handle extra expenses (Kirschner and Walum, 1978, p.523). On the positive side, there is more time available for each partner's job since there are few family pressures. When children are involved, though, the separate household solution becomes extremely difficult, and impossible for those unable to afford outside help (Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, p.471).

The difficulties of relocation decisions for civilian dual-career couples are shared by dual-military couples, as are some of the solution alternatives. However, dual-military couples must work within the added constraint of "the best interests of the Air Force" (AFR 36-20, 1985, p.231). This may be unique only in the fact that it is considered "official policy." It is probably

not very different at all from the philosophies of civilian corporations who are trying to make personnel decisions which will best contribute to corporate goals.

Role Conflict in Dual-Career Couples

The trends discussed concerning relocation decisions may represent an outward sign of the role conflict experienced in dual-career couples. Role conflict involves internal and external pressures of responding to the demands of a variety of roles. The primary roles discussed in the literature are those of worker, spouse, parent, and self (Holohan and Gilbert, 1979a, p.86; Holohan and Gilbert, 1979b, p.452). Discussions of role conflict generally focus on a comparison of the degree of conflict experienced by men versus women. As was the case with relocation decisions, the literature shows that couples generally exhibit traditional values, resulting in a much higher degree of role conflict experienced by women than by men.

Critical to a discussion of role conflict is an understanding of the different domestic arrangements of couples. A traditional arrangement (for dual-income couples) is one in which the wife's job is viewed as a hobby rather than a career, therefore her primary roles are those of wife, mother, and homemaker. An egalitarian marriage, on the other hand, is one in which both careers are considered to be equally important, and in which the

partners share equally in domestic and child-care demands (Poloma and Garland, 1971, p.534). It is important to note two factors: these arrangements constitute extreme ends of a spectrum, with many couples falling somewhere in the middle, and the categorization of traditional versus egalitarian is based on attitudes and actions, not on the types of jobs held.

Studies of expectations and attitudes of college students show that males and females are in agreement concerning career aspirations, but they show signs of non-egalitarian thinking in terms of future roles (Katz, 1986, pp.70-74; Peterson and Peterson, 1975, p.179). In a study involving undergraduate and graduate business students, there were few differences noted concerning perceived career commitment between men and women. However, females were highly likely to expect to have a career other than homemaker, with males much less likely to expect this from their future wives. Males also felt that their future wives would wait longer to return to work after having a child than females predicted they themselves would wait (Katz, 1986, pp.70- 74). In a second study, involving psychology students (primarily unmarried), respondents were asked to react to one of six stories concerning collaborating careers (with differing factors such as children, incomes, relocation opportunities) by indicating preference for one career

over the other. In a scenario involving equal incomes for both spouses, both male and female respondents leaned toward a traditional solution in which the wife should make a career sacrifice in order to care for the children. However, in cases in which the wife's income exceeded that of the husband, the choice was for the husband to make the sacrifice. The authors interpret this as an expression of flexibility in the attitudes of respondents, suggesting "that there is need not to rule out the possibility of parents engaging in collaborating careers" (Peterson and Peterson, 1975, p.179).

The literature includes several studies of individuals actually living in a dual-income arrangement, and the majority of these individuals report significantly more role conflict for women than for men. In one study involving dual-income (but not limited to dual-career) couples, all with at least one preschool child, there were significant differences noted between men and women in their perceptions of the spouse and parent roles. Women perceived the wife role as being less desirable than did men, perhaps indicating that husbands may not be aware of the amount of dissatisfaction experienced by their wives. Women also perceived fathers as being less tied-down and less child-oriented than did men. The author cautioned against applying these results to higher status dual-career couples, hypothesizing that dual-career

couples might experience the greatest amount of role conflict in the worker role, due to the greater demands of their jobs (Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper and Reaven, 1985, pp.308-310).

A second study made the distinction between dual-income and dual-career and attempted to clarify the differences in amount and types of role conflict experienced. A group of noncareer women actually showed more role conflict for each of the roles (worker, spouse, parent, and self) than did a group of career women. The career group showed greater satisfaction than the noncareer group in all four roles. These results were attributed primarily to the relative lack of spouse support in the noncareer group. In general, according to the authors, "variations in spouse support, work commitment, and the nature of the job situation may contribute to the extent to which married working women with children experience role conflict" (Holohan and Gilbert, 1979a, p.90).

Although these results seem to indicate that job factors and spouse support reduce role conflict in career women, the literature generally supports the view that women in dual-career couples experience a high degree of role conflict. Women report significantly higher degrees of conflict in work versus family and work versus self subscales than do men (Graddick and Farr, 1983, p.642), and

major problems with role strain exhibiting itself in fatigue, emotional strain, and guilt (Johnson and Johnson, 1977, p.393). Family versus career conflict was the factor most frequently cited by psychologist couples as being a problem area in their marriage. Comments indicated that this type of conflict was generally handled by the wife working her career around the needs of the family, a result of the traditional values held by both the husbands and the wives (Heckman, Bryson and Bryson, 1977, pp.327,328). In the latter two studies (Johnson and Johnson, 1977, p.393; Heckman and others, 1977, p.328), role conflict was apparent in spite of the husbands' support for their wives' careers. Women in dual-officer couples also show signs that they may be experiencing work versus family conflicts. Concerns about family problems have been blamed for the high attrition rate (double that for male counterparts) among the first group of female Air Force Academy graduates. Seventy percent of the women officers surveyed were married, most of them to other officers. They expressed concern over many family-related policies, including joint spouse assignments, maternity leave, child care and care for sick children (Maze, 1988b, p.10).

The non-egalitarian marriage is a common denominator in all of the examples of role conflict in dual-income couples. Although the term "non-egalitarian" pertains to

both household tasks and child-care responsibilities, it appears to be a much greater contributor to role conflict in those dual-income families with children. Even in cases in which husbands are supportive of their wives' careers and are willing to share in domestic responsibilities, the wives maintain primary responsibility for child-care (Johnson and Johnson, 1977, p.393). This may indicate that role conflict in these women "can be identified with child rearing, not the marriage relationship" (Johnson and Johnson, 1977, p.393). In a group of psychologist couples, the number of children in the family was shown to be negatively related to the wives' employment status, satisfaction with time available for domestic and recreational activities, and satisfaction with rate of career advancement. As the number of children increases, the amount of time available for various activities decreases, placing extra demands on the parents.

This shift in time demands can be met by both members of the dual-career couple sharing the extra requirements equally, or these extra requirements may be distributed unequally. The present data suggest that the latter solution is the more common: As the domestic demands increase, the burden for meeting these extra requirements falls disproportionately on the wife and is expressed in her increased dissatisfaction with both job and domestic activities [Bryson, Bryson and Johnson, 1978, p.76]

Although women have gained increasing equality in the workplace in recent years and will most likely continue to do so, this solution by itself will not eliminate the role

conflict experienced by working women. It is also essential that equality be achieved in the home, with men and women sharing domestic and parental responsibilities. For a woman to have a family and at the same time aggressively pursue a career, "will require a transformation in both the workplace and the parental division of labor - an even more revolutionary change than those now taking place in women's lives" (Gerson, 1986, p.36).

There is some question as to whether women are confined by the traditional views of males (in the workplace and at home), or whether they actually limit themselves by their own traditional views. Married women with preschool children who indicate high levels of achievement orientation (career values) are actually employed full-time (expression of career values) at very low rates (Faver, 1981, pp.106-108). This can be interpreted as meaning that the nonemployment of women in this group is due to structural constraints rather than by choice:

Here we find that women's career activity is inhibited primarily by structural, rather than psychological, factors. By implication, interventions into the structures of family role responsibilities, societal supports for parenting, and traditional job requirements are necessary to enhance women's career opportunities and participation [Faver, 1981, p.108].

Another interpretation, however, is that nonemployment of, or sacrifices by, career-oriented women are actions of

choice and willingly accepted. Women have reported acceptance of, and even satisfaction with, career limitations for the sake of the family. This is in spite of these women having an above average "will to succeed," and professional training as a doctor, lawyer, or college professor (Poloma and Garland, 1971, pp.536-539). A willingness to subordinate careers in order to meet the demands of domestic and child-care duties has also been reported in a group of female psychologists (Heckman and others, 1977, p.328). Traditional perceptions of family roles are evidently still ingrained in women, even those with career aspirations. These perceptions, in addition to male attitudes and social norms, help to explain the persistence of the non-egalitarian household.

In a small minority of dual-career couples, role conflict is not a problem. The individuals in these cases have comparable career investments, high levels of career commitment, very profeminist attitudes, and strong spouse support. Possible reasons for the lack of role conflict include the egalitarian nature of their marriages, the use of hired domestic help, or simply the high level of effectiveness of these women in dealing with their many roles (Holohan and Gilbert, 1979a, pp.463,464). Studying couples such as these may provide valuable information for other dual-career couples.

They seem to represent that minority of dual career marriages who are able "to keep it together" in the face of the odds against it. The importance of these

findings, then, lies in the information they contain concerning the ingredients of successful dual career marriages [Holohan and Gilbert, 1979a, p.465].

Employer Response

The unique concerns of dual-career couples lead to unique personnel issues for their employers. Although there is a growing awareness of this fact by civilian firms, there has been relatively little practical response to date (Stillman and Bowen, 1985, p.312; Catalyst, 1981, p.4; Newgren, Kellogg and Gardner, 1987, p.4). A company can respond to dual-career problems by "noncoping" or "control" mechanisms. Basically, noncoping companies are passive, responding on a case-by-case basis as required, while control type companies take an active role in confronting situations and revising policies (Hall and Hall, 1978, p.68). Most firms, until very recently, have been in the noncoping mode. For example, the primary types of assistance given for couples who are relocating are financial help and informal counseling (Newgren and others, 1987, p.7). More active approaches to the relocation issue include the use of new relocation policies such as actually finding positions for both spouses at a new location, or initiating a "no penalty" approach to transfers (in which refusal to transfer does not decrease advancement opportunity) (Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, pp.471,472).

Before companies will actively change personnel policies to accommodate dual-career couples, they must be convinced of the benefits to be gained. A limited amount of motivation to change might come out of a sense of corporate responsibility, but most changes will be driven by corporate self-interest in terms of profits, performance, productivity, retention, and recruitment (Statuto, 1984, pp.60,61). In the few cases in which new programs or policies have been implemented, the primary motivation was "good business sense" (Stillman and Bowen, 1985, p.312). Even those firms which have not initiated changes recognize that increased commitment will result from favorable policy changes (Hall and Hall, 1978, p.66; Maynard and Zawacki, 1979, p.471) and that the dual-career issue, if not addressed, "may harm productivity and, ultimately, profits" (Newgren and others, 1987, p.4). The key to a "win-win" solution, in which both the couple and the company benefit, may be flexibility on the part of both parties. They need to look for alternative, possibly creative solutions to problems, rather than viewing every problem as an "either-or" situation (Hall and Hall, 1978, p.70).

Relevance for Air Force Planners

As is the case for civilian firms, Air Force leaders are aware of the potential need to revise policies as the number of dual-military couples increases. Most

literature on this subject deals with the overall category of nontraditional family types, with very little of it limited to dual-military couples. Therefore, the literature discussed in this section pertains to dual-military couples as a subset of the larger group of nontraditional family types, unless stated otherwise.

The Air Force concern with nontraditional families stems from the more basic concern with retention of its personnel. The All Volunteer Force (AVF) has been in existence since December 1972, meaning that the services must compete directly with the civilian sector for employees. Although there have been ups and downs in the satisfaction of Air Force retention and recruiting goals, the current situation is quite good. Just as in the civilian sector, there is debate over whether the manning situation will remain satisfactory or will deteriorate in the next decade. The pool of Air Force recruits (the 18-year old population) is predicted to be at an all-time low by 1992. This may not be as critical as it appears, since the recruiting age bracket is actually 18 to 27 years (McBroom and Iverson, 1985, p.15). Whether or not the shortage of young recruits leads to personnel shortages will depend on factors external and internal to the Air Force. External or "pull" factors include the state of the economy and the current national opinion of the military, and are not directly controllable by Air

Force leaders. Internal or "push" factors are those directly affecting the working conditions and lifestyles of Air Force members, and are much more controllable (Little, 1987, pp.10-12). In a situation involving a high level of uncertainty, and within the framework of the AVF, Air Force leaders are looking for ways to improve the internal factors affecting retention.

A primary consideration in the effort to maximize retention is the nature of, and the desires of, the nontraditional families.

Air Force policies and programs which ignore or work to undermine Air Force families are destined to fail because Air Force members value their families as an institution above all others, including the Air Force. Recent retention problems are evidence of this phenomenon [AF Conf, 1980, p.15].

Evidence indicates that efforts should be focused on quality of life factors, especially those which directly affect spouse attitudes. Spouse support for a military member's career has consistently been named by married couples as the most important consideration in retention decisions. It is especially important to young enlisted and junior officer personnel, those who are more likely to have non-traditional values (AF Conf, 1980, p.55). This trend is particularly threatening to future retention rates, since these groups are the primary focus of retention concerns (Kringer, 1986, p.11). Since spouse attitudes are affected by whether or not the spouse works (military or civilian), "leaders should recognize that

more spouses of the company grade officers work outside the home and should accommodate for the stress and pressures this may bring, where feasible" (Knight, 1986, p.33). Air Force leaders recently officially acknowledged the issue of spouse employment. The Blue Ribbon Panel on Spouse Issues recommended to the Secretary and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force that a clear policy statement on spouse issues be adopted and implemented.

It is Air Force policy that the choice of a spouse to pursue employment, to be a homemaker, to attend school, or to serve as a volunteer in Air Force or local community activities is a private matter and is solely the decision of the individual concerned. No commander, supervisor, or other Air Force official will directly or indirectly impede or otherwise interfere with this decision. Likewise, the decision of the spouse in this matter will not be a factor used to affect the evaluation, promotion or assignment of the military member [Panel, 1985, p.15].

A second family-related factor, family separation, has a strong negative relationship to retention. When presented with a list of 19 choices, Army junior officers selected family separation as the strongest negative influence on retention decisions (Lund, 1978, pp.32-36). Dual-military couples have cited family separation as the main reason for not making the Air Force a career, and believe that family separation is much less of a problem in the civilian sector (Houk, 1980, pp.48-63). Presented with a hypothetical assignment requiring extended family separation, 51% of a group of female officers and 32% of

the male officers (all with military spouses) claimed they would leave the military. These responses show a high commitment to marriage, which should be recognized by military leaders (Griffith and others, 1986, p.127).

Family separation is more easily controlled by Air Force policy makers than is pay and allowance, thus they need to determine why the family is being separated. Current practices, such as unaccompanied tours and "join spouse" request refusals as well as the spouse's refusal to relocate due to his/her career opportunities are some areas to examine. Only this way will policy makers find the best ways to keep the family unit together: altering their current practices or changing policies to account in part for a career spouse (Houk, 1980, p.63).

Although quality of life factors, spouse support, and family separation are not related exclusively to dual-military couples, they are certainly relevant to this group. These factors come into play, in particular, when military couples are faced with relocation decisions. Based on typical attitudes described in the literature, retention decisions of military couples will be directly related to the perceived adequacy of join-spouse policies. As such, these policies should be subject to critical examination and modification if necessary. It should be noted, however, that dual-military couples must work within Air Force mission requirements, and cannot be accommodated at the expense of other personnel such as members who are single or have nonworking spouses (Williams, 1978, pp.109, 110; Sindt, 1981, p.22).

In summary, the Air Force is vitally concerned with retention of qualified personnel and aware of the importance of family considerations (including dual-military issues) to this concern.

The family of the Air Force member is very important to the ability of the Air Force to perform its mission. We are now an Air Force of more married members than before and the strength and vitality of the family is a key part of the strength of the Air Force. Our families must face the real demands of service life with its moves and separations but they also benefit from the real advantages of service life. Most of our families around the world are doing well, coping and growing, but we must all work to make our policies and practices such that we achieve improvement in Air Force family life [AF Conf, 1980, p.11].

Conclusion

This review of the literature included a discussion of the nature of dual-career couples, including unique problems and current trends. The same topics were addressed specifically for dual-military couples. The dual-career issue of relocation, the specific focus of this thesis, was discussed and related to the larger issue of role conflict. Finally, employer perceptions (both civilian and military) concerning potential personnel impacts of dual-career couples, as well as possible responses, were discussed.

III. Methodology

Introduction

This study used an existing set of responses to a survey administered by Air Force Manpower and Personnel Center (AFMPC) in January 1985. Certain limitations resulted from use of this database. The primary limitation was the fact that responses to questions of interest for this study consisted of categorical data on a nominal scale. Nominal data restrict the type and power of statistical tests available. However, the availability of the database, coupled with the existence of suitable nonparametric tests, made its use the most practical option.

Population and Sample

The population of interest consisted of all active duty United States Air Force officers in the ranks of captain or lieutenant, married to officers in the same category. The decision to restrict the population to these ranks was based on the following factors: 1) the majority of dual-officer couples fall into this category, 2) it is this group which will be of most concern to Air Force policymakers in coming years, and 3) this group is a product of the recent changes which have led to the

increased number of Air Force women (Air Force Academy graduates and diversified career field opportunities).

The exact size of the population of interest (at the time of data collection) was not known. However, an estimate was made based on figures compiled in November 1984, shortly before the survey was administered. At that time there were approximately 5336 officers married to other officers in the Air Force (Pellum, 1985). Of this figure, approximately 75% were assumed to be captains or lieutenants. This percentage was the same as the proportion of junior officers in the sample, and seemed to be consistent with statements in the literature. The estimated size of the population of interest was therefore 4002 individuals. This was assumed to be 50% male and 50% female, although there may have been a small to moderate number of junior-senior officer couples which would have slightly altered these figures.

The survey was administered to 2055 randomly selected Air Force individuals married to active duty members. A total of 1739 surveys were returned, representing an 85% response rate. Of this total, there were 489 officers, 51% female and 49% male (Pellum, 1985). Of the officers, 375 (77%) were captains or lieutenants, with a total of 172 males (46%) and 203 females (54%). Because of the use of an existing database, total sample size was predetermined. However, the following equation for

maximum sample size verifies the adequacy of the actual sample size:

$$n = \frac{N (z^2) \times p(1-p)}{(N-1) (d)^2 + (z^2) \times p(1-p)} \quad (1)$$

where

n = sample size
N = population size (4002 estimate)
p = maximum sample size factor (0.5)
d = desired tolerance (0.05)
z = factor of assurance (1.96) for 95% confidence level

(HQ USAF, 1974, pp.11-14)

The calculated sample size (n) is 351, quite close to the actual sample size of 375. The existing database apparently provided a sufficiently large sample to permit conclusions concerning the population of interest.

Survey Description

The measurement instrument used for this study was the Rapid Access Personnel Survey (RAPS) on Join Spouse Matters, a 38 question survey conducted by AFMPC/MPCY in January 1985 (Appendix A). The survey was directed by USAF/MP as part of a larger study looking into issues concerning women in the Air Force. It was sent by electronic message to Consolidated Base Personnel Offices worldwide on 18 January, with a completion deadline of 28 January (Harrington, 1985, p.32; Appendix A).

Survey questions included a series of biographical questions, including sex, rank, marriage information,

career intent, current career status, AFSC, and history of separation. Also included were a set of hypothetical questions concerning career decisions if faced with family separation. These questions involved career enhancement possibilities for one or both spouses and varying lengths of separations. The fact that potential retainability was assessed based on hypothetical assignment situations was a necessary limitation of this study. No database exists which ties retention decisions of dual-military couples to assignments involving family separation, and establishing a database for this study would require questioning individuals no longer in the military. For future purposes, a database of this sort might be developed from longitudinal studies tracking individuals through their careers, or by including necessary questions as a regular part of members' exit interviews.

Data Preparation

The following steps were taken to isolate the sample of interest from the entire group of survey respondents, and to identify subsets of interest within the sample: (The letter "Q", with an identifying number will be used to refer to specific survey questions [from Appendix A].)

1. Eliminate respondents indicating they are not married to military members on Q1 (response B).

2. Select those respondents indicating rank of 0-1 through 0-3 on Q3 (responses D,E,F). Eliminate all others.
3. Select those respondents indicating spouse's rank of 0-1 through 0-3 on Q4 (responses D,E,F). Eliminate all others.
4. Identify the sample subset of men and women from Q5 (A= male, B = female).
5. Identify those respondents with children from Q11 (responses B,C,D,E).

Assumptions Concerning Responses

Several assumptions were made concerning respondents' answers. In Q11, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they have "dependent children." In a technical sense, children are dependents of only one Air Force parent (for purposes of pay and benefits). The assumption concerning this question is that respondents interpreted the question in a non-technical sense, answering yes if they had children (regardless of dependent status). Response A to this question indicates the respondent is a non-parent, while all other responses indicate parenthood.

Each of questions 31 through 38 gave the respondent the following five choices in response to a hypothetical assignment decision:

- A. Take the assignment.
- B. Retire, if eligible.
- C. Separate, if eligible, and seek assignment with the Air National Guard or AF Reserve.
- D. Separate, if eligible, and would not seek assignment with the Air National Guard or AF Reserve.
- E. Don't know.

In evaluating responses, all options other than A and E were categorized as intent to separate. This was done in order to limit the analysis to active duty retention effects. Another assumption concerning these questions was the desire of spouses to be stationed together. In other words, all other factors being equal, it was assumed that respondents would prefer to be assigned to the same location as their spouses.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS, 1985) on a VAX 11/785 computer.

Descriptive. Frequencies of responses were calculated and tabulated for the survey questions relating to general descriptive information and investigative questions 1, 2 and 3 (presented in Chapter I). Responses to survey questions 2, 3, 6, 7, 11, 12 and 20 provided a description of the sample for the following items: rank structure, length of marriage, total active Federal service, career intentions, parental status, current join-spouse assignment status, and number of times

previously separated from spouse. Responses to survey questions 22, 33, and 30 provided a description of the sample relative to the following items pertaining to Investigative Question #1: longest acceptable continuous period of separation from spouse, total acceptable separation over an entire career, and the main factor in deciding to leave the Air Force rather than accept an assignment requiring separation from spouse. Frequencies of responses to survey questions 31 through 38 were used for Investigative Questions 2 and 3. Responses were categorized as either "intend to separate" or "intend to stay in the Air Force." Relative frequencies were graphed, allowing a comparison of intentions based on career enhancement factors and length of separation.

Statistical Analyses. Chi-square tests of independence were used for Investigative Questions 4 and 5. Using the male and female subsets previously identified from Q5, the following sequence of steps was carried out for each of questions 31 through 38 to test for significant differences in responses between male and female respondents:

1. Using SAS, construct a crosstabulation table for two variables: male/female vs. separate/don't separate.
2. Specify the CHISQ option of the SAS procedure to request a chi-square test for the following hypotheses:

H_0 : The proportion of respondents intending to separate under the given conditions is independent of sex.

H_a : The proportion of respondents intending to separate under the given conditions is dependent on sex.

3. Using a significance level of $\alpha = .05$, determine whether or not the calculated chi-square value is significant. If so, reject the null hypothesis.

Using the parent and non-parent subsets previously identified from Q11, the same steps were accomplished to test for significant differences in responses between parents and non-parents. The null and alternate hypotheses were as follows:

H_0 : The proportion of respondents intending to separate under the given conditions is independent of parental status.

H_a : The proportion of respondents intending to separate under the given conditions is dependent on parental status.

Summary

The methodology for this study involved analysis of an existing database of responses to a survey administered to military join-spouse individuals. The first step consisted of data preparation in order to isolate the sample of interest and to identify subsets of interest

within the sample. Following this, descriptive statistics were generated for the entire sample in response to investigative questions one, two and three. Finally, crosstabulation tables and chi-square tests were used to test for independence between responses to several hypothetical relocation scenarios and sex, and between the same set of responses and parental status.

IV. Results

This chapter describes the results of the analyses outlined in the previous chapter. Results are divided into the following sections: descriptive information and investigative questions one through five.

Descriptive Information

Tables 1 through 7 include frequencies of responses to several descriptive questions. Rank structure of the sample (which was limited to junior officers) is reflected in Table 1. Frequencies in Tables 2 and 3 are as expected for a relatively "young" group of junior officers. Table 2 shows 70% of the respondents having less than eight years of active federal military service. The significance of this figure is that most respondents are still at a point in their careers at which separation from the Air Force is a viable option. Table 3 describes the sample in terms of length of marriage. A large portion of respondents (88%) have been married less than eight years, not surprising in a young group.

TABLE 1		
RANK OF RESPONDENTS		
RANK	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
CAPT	263	71.7
FIRST LT	76	20.7
SECOND LT	28	7.6
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 2		
TOTAL ACTIVE FEDERAL MILITARY SERVICE OF RESPONDENTS		
TOTAL SERVICE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
LESS THAN 2 YRS	24	6.5
2-3 YRS	70	19.1
4-5 YRS	109	29.7
6-7 YRS	61	16.6
EIGHT OR MORE YRS	103	28.1
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 3		
LENGTH OF MARRIAGE OF RESPONDENTS		
LENGTH	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
LESS THAN 2 YRS	91	24.8
2-3 YRS	122	33.2
4-5 YRS	73	19.9
6-7 YRS	37	10.1
EIGHT OR MORE YRS	44	12
TOTAL	367	100

Table 4 describes career intentions of respondents. Over 95% of the respondents either intend to stay in the Air Force for at least 20 years or are undecided. These results, coupled with those in Table 2 (described above) point out the potential of this sample in terms of developing career officers, and therefore the importance of retention within this group.

TABLE 4		
DID RESPONDENTS CURRENTLY PLAN TO REMAIN IN THE AIR FORCE FOR A TOTAL OF AT LEAST 20 YEARS ACTIVE DUTY		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
YES	254	69.4
UNDECIDED	89	24.3
NO	21	5.7
N/A	2	.6
TOTAL	366	100

Table 5 reveals that over half of the respondents do not have children. This is consistent with figures in the literature for officer couples (Carr, AF Conf, Baldwin. However, it may also be a function of the fact that most respondents have been married for relatively short periods (Table 3), which may in turn be a function of the restricted sample.

Tables 6 and 7 provide a description of respondents' past success with joint-spouse procedures. According to Table 6, approximately 90% of the officers are currently

assigned with their spouses, consistent with the 88% success rate claimed in the literature (Carr). Table 7 describes the number of times individuals have been assigned apart from their spouses for at least six months.

Approximately two-thirds of the respondents have never been separated, and 94% have been separated one time or less. The relative success with join-spouse assignments reflected in these two tables may be a contributor to the high career commitment described earlier (Table 4).

TABLE 5 DID RESPONDENTS HAVE DEPENDENT CHILDREN FOR WHOM THEY WERE RESPONSIBLE?		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
YES	152	41.2
NO	215	58.8
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 6 WERE RESPONDENTS AND SPOUSES ASSIGNED TO THE SAME GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND ABLE TO ESTABLISH A COMMON HOUSEHOLD?		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
YES	330	89.9
NO	37	10.1
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 7		
NUMBER OF TIMES ASSIGNED APART FROM SPOUSE FOR AT LEAST SIX MONTHS		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
NEVER	235	64
ONCE	111	30.3
TWICE	18	4.9
THREE OR MORE	3	.8
TOTAL	367	100

Investigative Question #1

When faced with the possibility of family separation, how would retention decisions of dual-officer couples be influenced?

Tables 8, 9, and 10 describe general attitudes of respondents toward separation from their spouses. Table 8 summarizes respondents' opinions concerning the longest acceptable continuous separation from their spouses. Over three-fourths of the sample are not willing to be separated continuously for more than one year. An overwhelming 97% are willing to accept only up to two years of continuous separation. Table 9 summarizes respondents' acceptance of separation from their spouses over an entire career. Approximately 92% of the sample would accept a maximum of four years of separation during their careers. Table 10 describes respondents' main reasons for opting to separate or retire from the Air

Force rather than taking assignments separate from their spouses. The majority of respondents (72%) chose "do not want to be separated from spouse or children" as the primary reason. Of the remaining 22% who would leave the Air Force under the given circumstances, frequencies of response were fairly evenly divided among the following reasons: non-career-enhancing nature of future job, civilian job opportunities, no acceptable arrangements for child care, special family care situations, desire to remain in geographical area, other.

TABLE 8		
LONGEST ACCEPTABLE CONTINUOUS SEPARATION		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
LESS THAN 12 MONTHS	282	76.8
12 TO 18 MONTHS	42	11.5
19 TO 24 MONTHS	33	9
MORE THAN 24 MONTHS	10	2.7
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 9		
TOTAL ACCEPTABLE SEPARATION OVER A CAREER		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
LESS THAN ONE YR	68	18.5
1-2 YR	181	49.3
3-4 YR	88	24
MORE THAN FOUR	30	8.2
TOTAL	367	100

TABLE 10		
MAIN REASON FOR DECIDING TO SEPARATE OR RETIRE RATHER THAN TAKE SEPARATE ASSIGNMENTS		
RESPONSE	NUMBER	PERCENT OF TOTAL
DON'T WANT TO BE SEPARATED FROM SPOUSE OR CHILDREN	261	71.1
WOULD NOT SEPARATE	24	6.5
NON-CAREER ENHANCING NATURE OF FUTURE JOB	21	5.7
CIVILIAN JOB OPPORTUNITIES	20	5.5
OTHER	41	11.2
TOTAL	367	100

Investigative Question #2

How are such decisions affected by career enhancement factors (e.g., one or the other spouse must make career sacrifices to maintain family integrity)?

Figure 1 shows the frequency of respondents claiming they would separate in response to career desirability scenarios presented in Questions 31 through 34, with a given assignment length of "two years or less." Figure 2 presents the same information for Questions 35 through 38, which include the same career desirability scenarios as Questions 31 through 34, but for a given assignment length of "more than two years." Over one-third of the sample would leave the Air Force rather than be separated from their spouses, regardless of the desirability of the jobs.

Beyond this, the desirability of the respondent's job (and not the spouse's job) seems to drive the decision to leave the Air Force. The frequency of those who would separate, for either assignment length, was highest for those cases in which the respondent would receive a less than desirable job (Q32, Q34, Q36, Q38).

Investigative Question #3

How does the length of separation affect such decisions?

Figure 3 combines the information from Figures 1 and 2, allowing a visual comparison of responses to sets of questions in which the length of the assignment is the only difference (Q31 vs Q35, Q32 vs Q36, Q33 vs Q37, Q34 vs Q38). Frequencies of those who would leave the Air Force are higher, in each pair of questions, for the assignment length of "more than two years." At least 50%

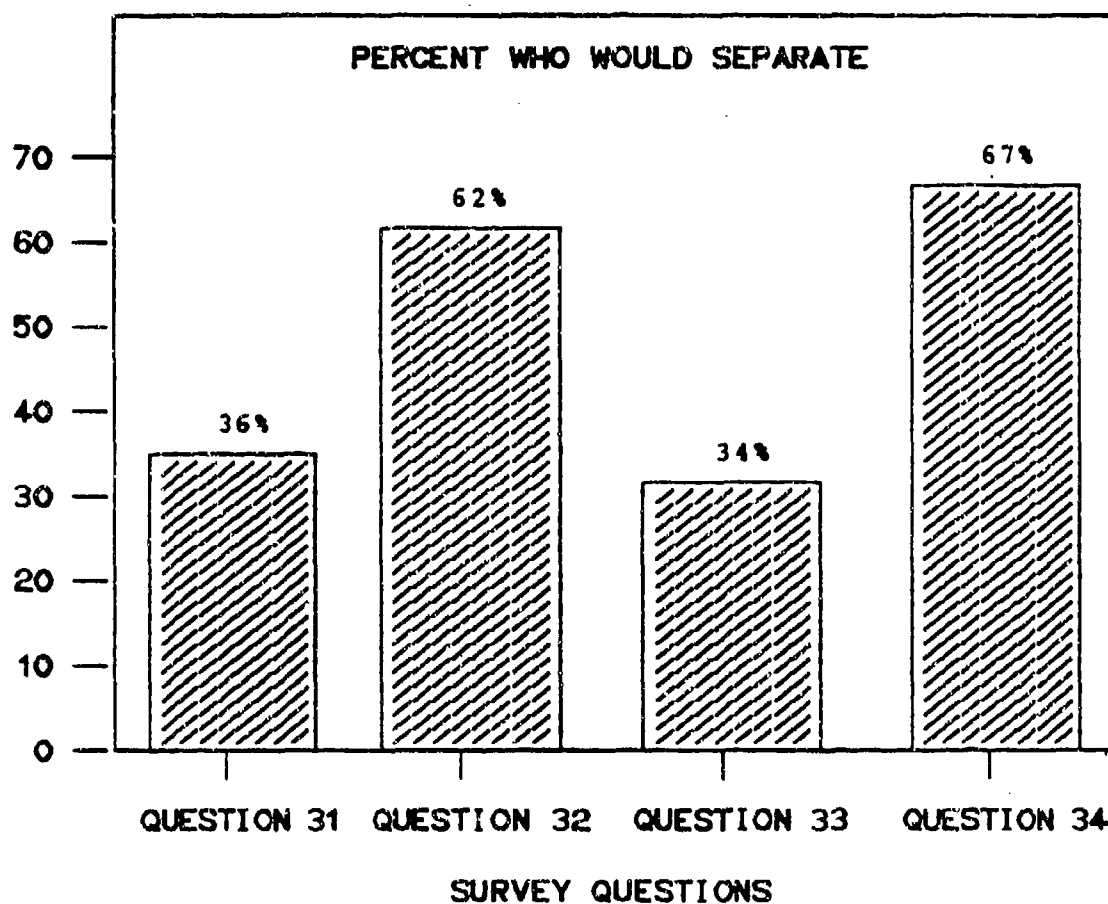


Figure 1. Percent of Respondents Who Would Leave AF Given Scenarios in Questions 31 Through 34 (Appendix A).

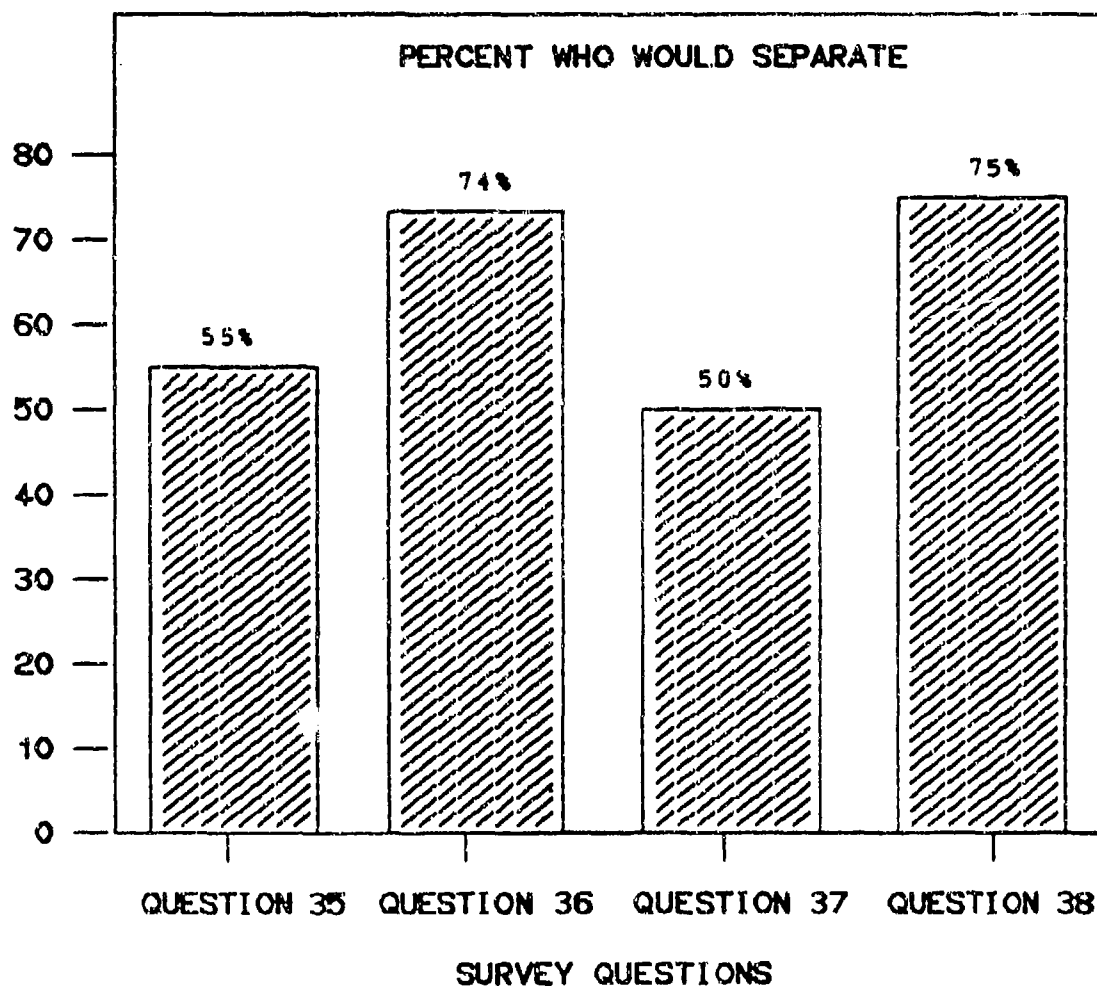


Figure 2. Percent of Respondents Who Would Leave AF Given Scenarios in Questions 35 Through 38 (Appendix A).

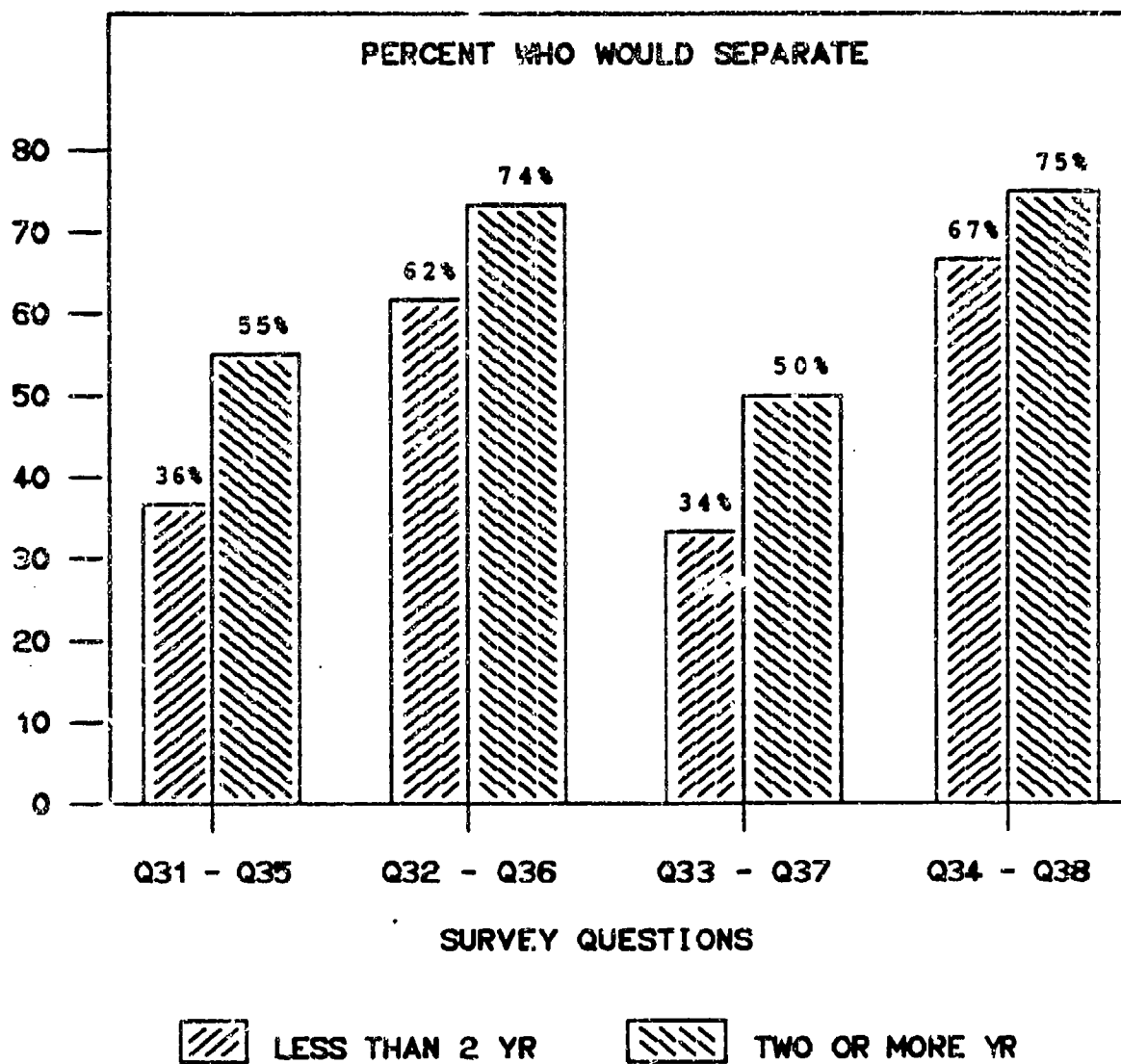


Figure 3. Percent of Respondents Who Would Leave AF Given Scenarios in Questions 31 Through 38 (Appendix A).

of the sample would leave the Air Force rather than be separated from their spouse for more than two years (regardless of job desirability).

Investigative Question #4

How are such decisions related to sex of the individuals? Does one spouse's career appear to be dominant over the other spouse's in terms of relocation decisions?

Figure 4 provides a visual comparison of frequencies of male and female respondents who would separate under the conditions presented in Questions 31 through 38. Table 11 lists results of the chi-square tests of independence based on sex of respondents. (Contingency tables for individual questions are included in Appendix B). The chi-square value for each of Questions 31 through 38 is not significant at the .05 level; therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for any case. The proportion of respondents intending to separate is independent of sex.

TABLE 11				
SUMMARY - INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION #4				
	% SEPARATING MALE	FEMALE	CHI-SQUARE VALUE	PROB
Q31	37	36	.027	.869
Q32	59	65	1.161	.281
Q33	36	33	.19	.663
Q34	68	66	.147	.702
Q35	50	59	2.529	.112
Q36	71	76	1.059	.304
Q37	49	52	.327	.567
Q38	72	78	2.185	.139

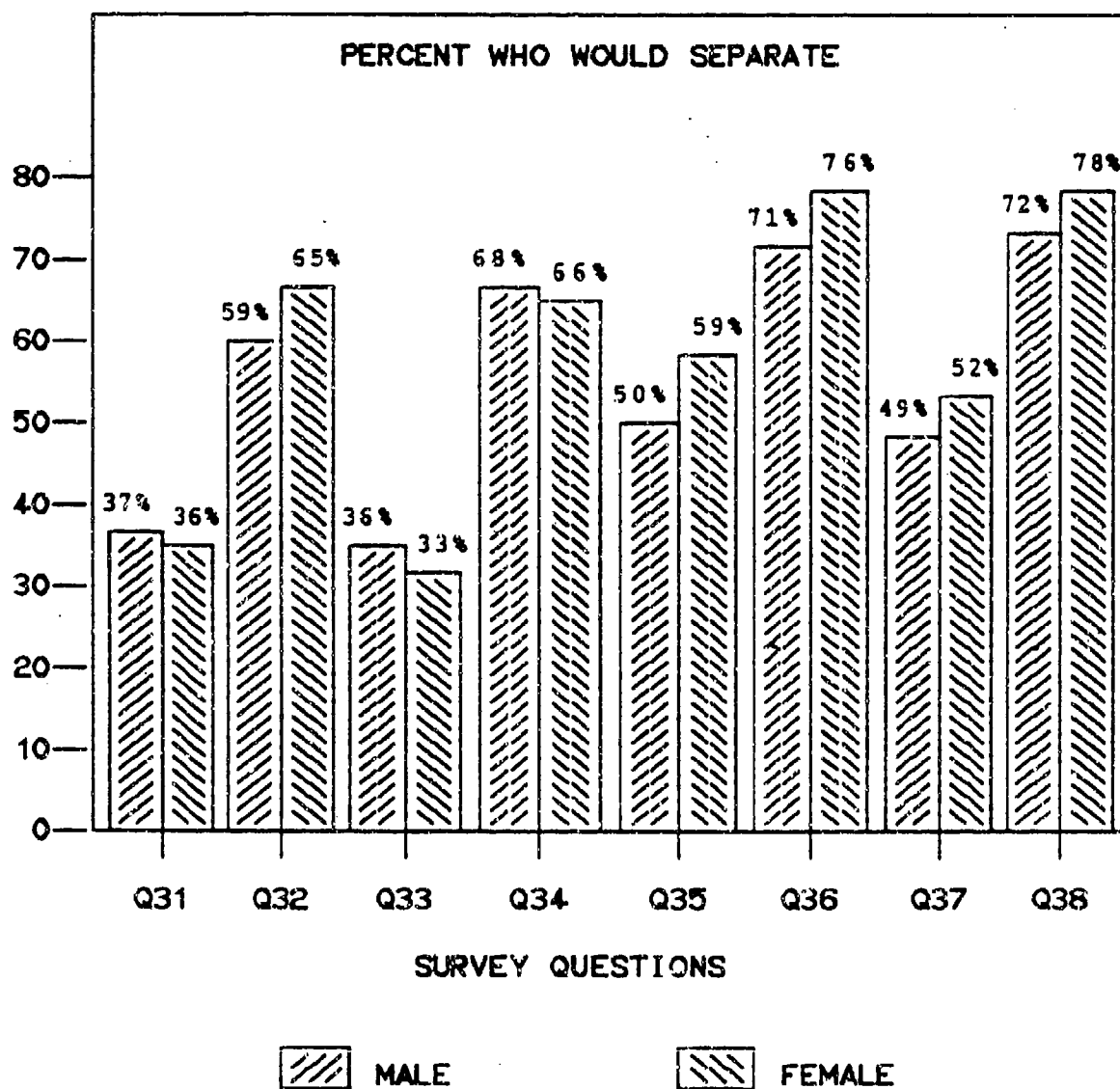


Figure 4. Percent of Male and Female Respondents Who Would Leave AF Given Scenarios in Questions 31 Through 38 (Appendix A).

Investigative Question #5

How are such decisions related to parental status?

Figure 5 provides a visual comparison of frequencies of parents and non-parents who would separate under the conditions presented in Questions 31 through 38. Table 12 lists results of the chi-square tests of independence based on parental status of respondents. (Contingency tables for individual questions are included in Appendix B). The chi-square value for Question 34 is significant at the .05 level; therefore the null hypothesis is rejected for this case. The proportion of respondents intending to separate under the conditions presented in Question 34 is dependent on parental status. For all other cases the chi-square value is not significant at the .05 level; therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for these cases.

TABLE 12				
SUMMARY - INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION #5				
	% SEPARATING		CHI-SQUARE VALUE	PROB
	PARENTS	NON-PARENTS		
Q31	36	37	.057	.811
Q32	59	65	1.408	.235
Q33	35	34	.033	.856
Q34	61	71	4.012	.045 *
Q35	53	56	.229	.632
Q36	72	75	.461	.497
Q37	54	47	1.507	.22
Q38	73	77	.66	.417

* $p < .05$

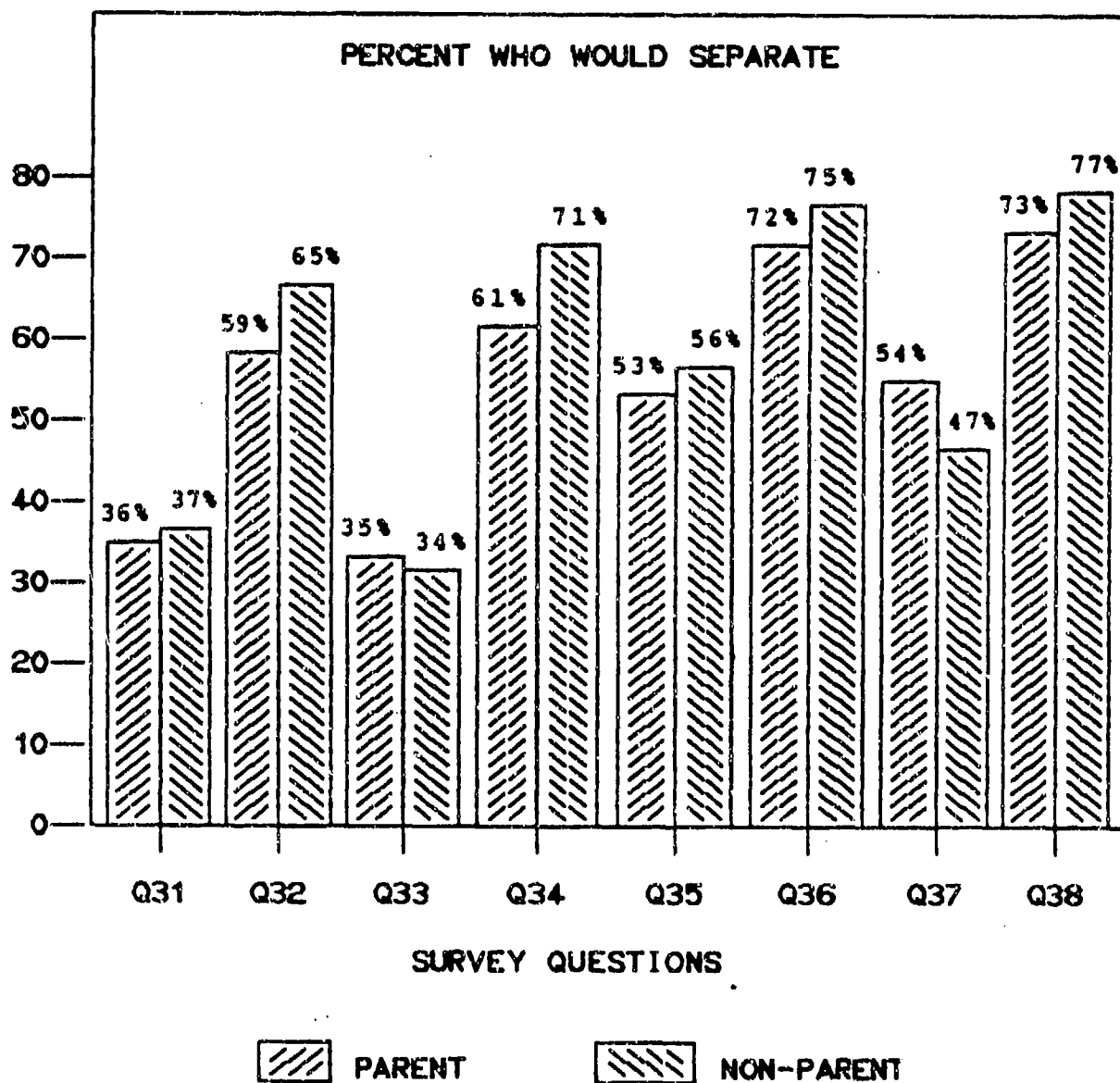


Figure 5. Percent of Parent and Non-Parent Who Would Leave AF Given Scenarios in Questions 31 Through 38 (Appendix A).

Summary

In this chapter, results of analyses involving descriptive information and each of the investigative questions have been presented. Chapter V will consist of conclusions pertaining to these results and recommendations resulting from this research.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be drawn from the results presented in Chapter IV. The first of these concerns the apparent success of current join-spouse procedures for junior officers. A large majority of the individuals surveyed are presently colocated with their spouses and have faced little or no separation since joining the Air Force (Tables 6 and 7). Additionally, the high career commitment expressed by survey respondents (Table 4) indicates satisfaction with join-spouse procedures (and with Air Force policies and procedures in general). However, the success of procedures and resultant satisfaction of individuals may be primarily a function of the youth of the sample in terms of length of service and length of marriage. As discussed in Chapter II, personnel actions become more complex as individuals progress beyond the junior officer ranks, making join-spouse requests more difficult to accomodate.

It is not clear, however that survey respondents' expectations are in line with this fact. Over three-fourths of the sample are unwilling to accept a continuous separation longer than 12 months, and two-thirds of the sample claim they will accept no more than two years

of total separation during their careers (Tables 8 and 9). Apparently, the expectation is that join-spouse assignments will be as easy to arrange during later career stages as they are now. This is contrary to the claims of personnel specialists and to the warning in AFR 36-20 that military couples should "expect periods of separation during their military careers" (AFR 36-20, 1985, p.231). The junior officers surveyed are either overly optimistic, or simply plan to work within the join-spouse system for as long as possible with the understanding that they can leave the Air Force if faced with an unacceptable situation.

The willingness of individuals to accept very little separation from spouses leads to another conclusion, the extremely high family commitment of these individuals. This conclusion is supported by responses to the hypothetical assignment scenarios (Q31-Q38). Even given a separation period of "two years or less," over one-third of the respondents claim they would leave the Air Force regardless of the desirability of their jobs (Figure 1). Over half of the respondents would leave the Air Force when offered any assignment involving more than two years' separation from their spouses (Figure 2). Furthermore, the primary reason given for leaving the Air Force in a given situation is "don't want to be separated from spouse or children," as opposed to career-related factors (Table 10). Clearly, although the respondents seem oriented toward an

Air Force career, family integrity takes priority over the career. This is consistent with findings of the Air Force Conference on Families (1980, p.15) and the Blue Ribbon Panel Report on Spouse Issues (1988, p.13), both of which concluded that today's Air Force members are likely to place the family above the Air Force when conflicts arise.

Another conclusion from the responses to Questions 31 through 38, one which has implications for Air Force personnel planners, is that the length of family separation is a factor in the decision of whether or not to leave the Air Force. In spite of the commitment to family integrity discussed above, the majority of respondents are willing to accept a limited separation (two years or less) in some cases. Possibly, an even larger majority would be willing to accept separation of one year or less (although this option was not included in the survey responses). It is not an "all or none" decision - respondents would not automatically leave the Air Force when faced with family separation. Therefore, if separations are necessary, retention can be maximized by keeping the period of separation to a minimum.

In addition to the length of separation, desirability of future jobs also is a factor in the relocation decision.

The frequency of individuals claiming they would leave the Air Force (rather than be separated) was lowest when both individuals were to have highly desirable jobs and highest

when both were to have less than desirable jobs. However, the decision seems to be based almost exclusively on the desirability of the respondent's job with little regard for desirability of the spouse's job. Frequencies of responses are quite close for cases in which both jobs are highly desirable and cases in which only the respondent's job is highly desirable (Figures 1 and 2). Apparently the junior officers in the sample are concerned with personal job satisfaction, but perhaps underestimate this same concern for their spouses. Results might be different in a survey of couples rather than of individuals (to be discussed under recommendations). The implication for personnel managers: if separation is necessary, efforts should be made to place both individuals in desirable jobs in order to maximize retention.

For all scenarios presented in Questions 31 through 38, the decision of whether or not to leave the Air Force is independent of sex (Table 11). The conclusion from this result is that the officers in this group are non-traditional in their predicted decisions. In a traditional group (as discussed in the literature review), significantly more women than men would be expected to predict they would leave the Air Force rather than endure family separation. If these officers are indeed non-traditional, they are among the minority of dual-career couples in which role-conflict does not manifest itself in

relocation decisions. As mentioned in the literature review, possible explanations are the egalitarian nature of their marriages, the use of hired domestic help, or a high level of effectiveness on the part of the women in dealing with their career and family roles (Holohan and Gilbert, 1979a, pp.463,464).

It is possible, however, that the non-traditional views expressed result from the youth of the sample. Most respondents are in the early stages of career and marriage and the majority are childless. Results might reflect more traditional opinions in a sample including a sufficient number of respondents of all career and marital stages. This possibility is supported by the recently identified trend for female Air Force Academy graduates to leave the Air Force at a higher rate than their male peers primarily due to family concerns (Maze,1988b,p.10). The conduct of a survey addressing this topic is listed as a recommendation for further research.

The final conclusions pertain to the effect of parental status on the retention decision given the circumstances in Questions 31 through 38. For seven of the eight survey questions, the decision to leave the Air Force is independent of parental status (Table 12). This result may indicate the perceived adequacy of the Air Force family support system (e.g. child care, family security, youth programs). The fact that parents are as likely as non-

parents to remain in the Air Force while separated from their spouses indicates confidence in their ability (or that of their spouses) to be single parents in the Air Force.

In only one case, Question 34, is there a significant difference in the frequencies of parents and non-parents who would leave the Air Force. Given an assignment length of two years or less, with both jobs less than desirable, significantly more non-parents than parents would leave the Air Force. There is no obvious explanation for this result. Perhaps parents feel more "tied" to their jobs (for financial security) and are therefore more willing to put up with a limited separation. Non-parents are much less hesitant to leave the Air Force when faced with two non-desirable jobs and family separation. This finding suggests the need for further research in this area (see recommendations).

Conclusions drawn from Questions 31 through 38 are based entirely on responses to hypothetical questions (as discussed in Chapter III), a limitation which should be kept in mind. Very complex decisions which may be made far in the future (when career and family variables are vastly different) are reduced in this survey to simple "what if" questions. One of the recommendations for further research, in the following section, addresses the use of actual rather than hypothetical decisions.

Recommendations

Personnel Policies. Based on the results and conclusions discussed above, the following recommendations are made concerning Air Force personnel policies. These recommendations should be considered only to the extent that they meet the basic constraint of "the best interest of the Air Force," and that they do not result in discrimination against personnel categories other than join-spouse couples.

1. Air Force personnel planners and managers should actively track join-spouse couples, including numbers recruited and retained and the percent jointly located. These members' exit interviews should routinely include questions pertaining to the effect of join-spouse policies on their decision to leave the Air Force.

2. In situations in which it is necessary to separate couples, the length of separation should be minimized (no more than two years, less if possible, for each period of separation).

3. If separation of couples is necessary, efforts should be made to place both individuals in desirable jobs.

4. The literature suggests that quality of life factors and spouse support are critical to retention (AF Conf, 1980). As such, Air Force leaders should continue the current emphasis on family issues, paying particular attention to military couples as a special category. The

family emphasis should include improved family support and child care centers (AF Conf, 1980).

5. In recognition of the number of employed spouses and the importance of spouse attitudes to retention (Knight, 1986, p.33), family support centers should include relocation counseling and employment assistance for civilian spouses among their services.

6. The recent policy change initiated by the Blue Ribbon Panel on Spouse Issues is a step in the right direction. This policy and the resultant regulations should receive close attention from commanders and supervisors.

Further Research. Following are possible areas of further research on this subject.

1. Conduct a similar study including a sufficient sample of senior officers and senior non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Obtain results for the entire sample and for each sub-group (junior officers, senior officers, NCOs). This will permit observation of traditional and non-traditional values as they vary with career stages and category.

2. Conduct a longitudinal study, following a group of officers as they progress in rank. Monitor retention within the group as well as the reasons for retention decisions. Actual decisions can then be compared with the

officers' predictions of how they would react to given situations.

3. Include domestic and attitudinal information in the study, such as egalitarianism of marriages, spouse support, and career commitment. A case study approach might be a reasonable way to address all of the variables involved.

4. Conduct the study using couples rather than individuals. This will show whether or not individuals' opinion and expectations are consistent with those of their spouses. It may also provide insight into the mechanisms used by couples in resolving career versus family conflicts.

5. Conduct further research exploring the unique problems and concerns of military couples with children, as well as the potential effects on retention.

Summary

Results of this study indicate that most dual-officer couples are committed to Air Force careers, but not at the expense of family values. In order to maximize retention of these couples, Air Force managers should attempt to minimize family separation. When it is essential that couples be separated (in order to meet mission requirements), efforts should be made to place both members in desirable jobs.

The existing policy concerning officer couples (AFR 36-20) is adequate given the fact that these couples make up a relatively small percentage of total officers. However, if the number of couples continues to rise dramatically, the dual-officer couple may become a retention-critical personnel category. It may then be necessary for Air Force leaders to revise policies to better ensure, or possibly guarantee, family integrity for these couples. Monitoring of couples and further research concerning their career and family attitudes, as recommended in the previous section, will help Air Force leaders to determine the need for such a change.

APPENDIX A

RAPID ACCESS PERSONNEL SURVEY (RAPS)
OF JOIN-SPOUSE MATTERS

01

JAN 85 RR RR EEEE

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HQ AFMPC RANDOLPH AFB TX//MPCY//

AIG 8106//DP/DPM/DPHQ/DPHJA//

ALPERSCOM//DP/MP/IG//

AIG 8437//DPM//

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A/ 024/85 B/ 02/ /85 FOR AIG 8437 AND ALPERSCOM INFO ONLY.

SUBJECT: RAPID ACCESS PERSONNEL SURVEY (RAPS) OF JOIN SPOUSE
MATTERS (SCN 85-023)

SUSPENSE: 1200 CST, 23 JAN 85

REF: OUR AIG 8106 MSG, 152210Z JAN 85, SAME SUBJECT.

1. THIS MSG CONTAINS THE SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT
NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH THE RAPS OF JOIN SPOUSE MATTERS.
2. SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS:
 - A. SURVEY SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN GROUP SESSIONS HELD WITHIN THE
CBPO. DO NOT SEND THE SURVEY TO THE INDIVIDUALS AT UNITS BECAUSE OF
TIME CONSTRAINTS. PARTICIPANTS WILL BE OFFICERS AND AIRMEN CURRENTLY
MARRIED TO OTHER AF PERSONNEL. WE NEED AS NEAR 100 PERCENT PARTICI-
PATION AS POSSIBLE SO SUBSTITUTION IS AUTHORIZED FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO
ARE ON LEAVE, TDY OR OTHERWISE UNAVAILABLE. PLEASE SUBSTITUTE BY
LIKE GRADE WHERE THE MEMBER IS MARRIED TO ANOTHER AF MEMBER.

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8. REPRODUCE FROM THIS MESSAGE THE SURVEY PORTION BEGINNING WITH PARA 6. THIS WILL BE THE SURVEY BOOKLET. SINCE ANSWERS WILL BE RECORDED ON AF FORM 1530 OR AF FORM 1713 AND NOT ON THE SURVEY "BOOKLET," YOU MAY REUSE THE "BOOKLETS" AS REQUIRED.

3. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPANTS: MOST PARTICIPANTS WILL BE UNFAMILIAR WITH RESPONDING ON AF FORM 1530 OR AF FORM 1713. ONLY ONE RESPONSE PER SURVEY QUESTION IS REQUIRED. PLS REVIEW ALL FORMS TO ENSURE THAT PARTICIPANTS HAVE COMPLETED THEM PROPERLY; I.E., ONE RESPONSE PER ITEM.

4. REPORTING FORMAT: FORWARD SURVEY DATA VIA AUTODIN IAW AFM 30-130, VOL 1, CHAP 14, PARA 14-2F. RESPONSE FORMAT FOR THIS SURVEY SHOULD APPEAR AS FOLLOWS AND NOT AS SHOWN IN THE EXAMPLE IN THE MANUAL.

ITEM	ENTRY
1-38	ALPHA CHARACTER FOR 38 QUESTIONS
39-49	BLANK
50-51	YOUR CBPO ID
52-59	BLANK
60-66	SCN85-2

REMAINING BLOCKS WILL BE LEFT BLANK.

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5. DATA TRANSMISSION: KEYPUNCH THE SURVEY DATA AND TRANSMIT VIA AUTODIN NLT 1200 CST, 28 JAN 85. TIMING DOES NOT PERMIT ANY EXTENSIONS. SURVEY FORMS AND RESPONSE CARDS SHOULD BE RETAINED IAW AFM 30-130, VOL 1, CHAP 14, PARA 14-2F.

6. RAPS OF JOIN SPOUSE MATTERS. THE ATTITUDES OF MEMBERS MARRIED TO OTHER AF MEMBERS ARE OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE. YOUR RESPONSES WILL BE COMBINED WITH RESPONSES FROM AN AF-WIDE SAMPLE OF ABOUT 2,000 ACTIVE DUTY MEMBERS WHO ARE MARRIED TO OTHER AF MEMBERS. A REPORT WILL BE DEVELOPED FOR HQ USAF/MP. YOUR VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IS REQUESTED.

RAPS OF JOIN SPOUSE MATTERS

1. ARE YOU CURRENTLY MARRIED TO ANOTHER ACTIVE DUTY AF MEMBER?

A. YES

B. NO: STOP AND TURN IN SURVEY

2. HOW LONG HAVE YOU AND YOUR CURRENT SPOUSE BEEN MARRIED?

A. LESS THAN 2 YEARS

B. 2 BUT LESS THAN 4 YEARS

C. 4 BUT LESS THAN 6 YEARS

D. 6 BUT LESS THAN 8 YEARS

E. 8 BUT LESS THAN 10 YEARS

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F. 10 BUT LESS THAN 12 YEARS

G. 12 BUT LESS THAN 20 YEARS

H. 20 YEARS OR MORE

3. WHAT IS YOUR RANK?

A. COL

B. LT COL

C. MAJ

D. CAPT

E. 1LT

F. 2LT

G. CMSGT

H. SMSGT /

I. MSGT

J. TSGT

K. SSGT

L. SGT

M. SRA

N. A1C

O. AMN

P. AB

4. WHAT IS YOUR SPOUSE'S RANK?

A. COL OR ABOVE

B. LT COL

C. MAJ

D. CAPT

E. 1LT

F. 2LT

G. CMSGT

I. MSGT

J. TSGT

K. SSGT

L. SGT

M. SRA

N. A1C

O. AMN

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H. MSGT

P. AB

5. WHAT IS YOUR SEX?

A. MALE

B. FEMALE

6. HOW MUCH TOTAL ACTIVE FEDERAL MILITARY SERVICE (TAFMS) HAVE YOU COMPLETED?

A. LESS THAN 2 YEARS

B. 2 BUT LESS THAN 4 YEARS

C. 4 BUT LESS THAN 6 YEARS

D. 6 BUT LESS THAN 8 YEARS

E. 8 BUT LESS THAN 10 YEARS

F. 10 BUT LESS THAN 12 YEARS

G. 12 BUT LESS THAN 20 YEARS

H. 20 YEARS OR MORE

7. DO YOU CURRENTLY PLAN TO REMAIN IN THE AIR FORCE FOR A TOTAL OF AT LEAST 20 YEARS ACTIVE DUTY?

A. YES

B. UNDECIDED

C. NO

D. N/A, ALREADY SERVED 20 YEARS

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8. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT CAREER STATUS?
- A. 1ST TERM AIRMAN
 - B. 2ND TERM AIRMAN
 - C. CAREER AIRMAN (ON 3RD OR MORE ENLISTMENT)
 - D. OFFICER ON INITIAL SERVICE COMMITMENT
 - E. OFFICER BEYOND INITIAL SERVICE COMMITMENT
9. ARE YOU CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO A MOBILITY POSITION?
- A. YES
 - B. NO
10. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TOUR CATEGORIES BEST APPLIES TO YOU?
- A. SHORT OVERSEA, ACCOMPANIED
 - B. SHORT OVERSEA, UNACCOMPANIED
 - C. LONG OVERSEA, ACCOMPANIED
 - D. LONG OVERSEA, UNACCOMPANIED
 - E. CONUS ISOLATED, ACCOMPANIED
 - F. CONUS ISOLATED, UNACCOMPANIED
 - G. NORMAL CONUS LOCATION
11. DO YOU HAVE DEPENDENT CHILDREN FOR WHOM YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE?
- A. NO
 - B. YES, LIVING WITH ME AND/OR MY MILITARY SPOUSE

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- C. YES, BUT TEMPORARILY LIVING WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME OR MY MILITARY SPOUSE
- D. YES, BUT PERMANENTLY LIVING WITH SOMEONE OTHER THAN ME OR MY MILITARY SPOUSE
- E. A COMBINATION OF B, C OR D
- 12.. ARE YOU AND YOUR MILITARY SPOUSE ASSIGNED TO THE SAME GEOGRAPHIC AREA WHERE YOU ARE ABLE TO ESTABLISH A COMMON HOUSEHOLD?
- A. YES .
- B. NO
13. ARE YOU AND YOUR MILITARY SPOUSE ASSIGNED TO THE SAME INSTALLATION?
- A. YES
- B. NO
14. ARE YOU AND YOUR MILITARY SPOUSE ASSIGNED TO THE SAME UNIT?
- A. YES
- B. NO
15. WHAT IS THE FIRST DIGIT OF YOUR AFSC?
- | | |
|------|------|
| A. 0 | F. 5 |
| B. 1 | G. 6 |
| C. 2 | H. 7 |

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D. 3

I. 8

E. 4

J. 9

16. WHAT IS THE SECOND DIGIT OF YOUR AFSC?

A. 0

F. 5

B. 1

G. 6

C. 2

H. 7

D. 3

I. 8

E. 4

J. 9

17. WHAT IS THE FIRST DIGIT OF YOUR SPOUSE'S AFSC?

A. 0

F. 5

B. 1

G. 6

C. 2

H. 7

D. 3

I. 8

E. 4

J. 9

18. WHAT IS THE SECOND DIGIT OF YOUR SPOUSE'S AFSC?

A. 0

F. 5

B. 1

G. 6

C. 2

H. 7

D. 3

I. 8

E. 4

J. 9

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MILITARY LIFE INVOLVES SOME AMOUNT OF FAMILY SEPARATION WHETHER BOTH MEMBERS ARE MILITARY OR ONE IS CIVILIAN. WITH INCREASING NUMBERS OF WOMEN IN THE NATIONAL WORK FORCE, DUAL CAREER FAMILIES ARE ALSO INCREASING AND FAMILY SEPARATION IS BECOMING LESS UNUSUAL. AIR FORCE JOINT SPOUSE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES ARE INTENDED TO PROVIDE MILITARY COUPLES THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE TOGETHER SO LONG AS THERE ARE VALID AIR FORCE REQUIREMENTS FOR BOTH MEMBERS AT THE SAME LOCATION. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE AIR FORCE TO UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT POSSIBLE SEPARATION FROM YOUR SPOUSE.

19. HOW LONG DO YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE EXPECT TO BE SEPARATED DURING YOUR CURRENT ASSIGNMENT?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. N/A | E. 18 BUT LESS THAN 36 MONTHS |
| B. LESS THAN 6 MONTHS | F. 36 MONTHS OR MORE |
| C. 6 BUT LESS THAN 12 MONTHS | G. DON'T KNOW |
| D. 12 BUT LESS THAN 18 MONTHS | |

20. HOW MANY TIMES SINCE YOU'VE BEEN MARRIED HAVE YOU BEEN ASSIGNED APART FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR AT LEAST 6 MONTHS? (EXCLUDE INITIAL TECHNICAL TRAINING)

- A. NEVER
B. ONCE

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- C. TWICE
 - D. THREE TIMES
 - E. FOUR TIMES
 - F. FIVE OR MORE TIMES
21. HOW MANY TIMES SINCE YOU'VE BEEN MARRIED HAVE YOU BEEN ON A TDY THAT EXCEEDED 3 MONTHS? (EXCLUDE INITIAL TECHNICAL TRAINING)
- A. NEVER
 - B. ONCE
 - C. TWICE
 - D. THREE TIMES
 - E. FOUR TIMES
 - F. FIVE OR MORE TIMES
22. GIVEN THAT YOU MUST BE ASSIGNED AWAY FROM YOUR SPOUSE, WHAT IS THE LONGEST CONTINUOUS PERIOD OF TIME YOU COULD ACCEPT BEING ASSIGNED AWAY FROM YOUR SPOUSE?
- A. MORE THAN 5 YEARS
 - B. 5 YEARS
 - C. 4 YEARS
 - D. 3 YEARS
 - E. 2 YEARS

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F. 1 1/2 YEARS

G. 1 YEAR

H. LESS THAN 1 YEAR

23. WHAT IS THE TOTAL PERIOD OF TIME (COVER AN ENTIRE CAREER) YOU
COULD ACCEPT BEING ASSIGNED AWAY FROM YOUR SPOUSE?

A. 10 YEARS OR MORE

B. 8-9 YEARS

C. 6-7 YEARS

D. 5 YEARS

E. 4 YEARS

F. 3 YEARS

G. 2 YEARS

H. 1 1/2 YEARS

I. 1 YEAR

J. LESS THAN 1 YEAR

24. IF DURING 20 YEARS OF MILITARY SERVICE YOU HAD 7 ASSIGNMENTS,
HOW MANY OF THESE ASSIGNMENTS COULD YOU SPEND APART FROM YOUR
SPOUSE WITHOUT SERIOUSLY AFFECTING YOUR PERSONAL CAREER
INTENTIONS?

A. N/A, I'VE ALREADY DECIDED TO SEPARATE BEFORE I'M ELIGIBLE

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TO RETIRE

B. 1

C. 2

D. 3

E. 4

F. 5

G. 6

H. 7

ASSUME YOUR SPOUSE IS IN AN ACCOMPANIED TOUR AREA WHERE DEPENDENTS ARE AUTHORIZED. GIVEN THE POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENT SITUATIONS IN QUESTIONS 25-29, WHAT WOULD YOU DO? USE THE SCALE BELOW FOR Q25-29.

A. I WOULD TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT

B. I WOULD RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE

C. I WOULD SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE

D. I WOULD SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE

E. DON'T KNOW

25. YOU RECEIVED AN ASSIGNMENT WHEREBY YOU WOULD BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR 12 MONTHS OR LESS.

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26. YOU RECEIVED AN ASSIGNMENT WHEREBY YOU WOULD BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR 13 TO 18 MONTHS.
27. YOU RECEIVED AN ASSIGNMENT WHEREBY YOU WOULD BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR 19 TO 24 MONTHS.
28. YOU RECEIVED AN ASSIGNMENT WHEREBY YOU WOULD BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR 25 TO 30 MONTHS.
29. YOU RECEIVED AN ASSIGNMENT WHEREBY YOU WOULD BE SEPARATED FROM YOUR SPOUSE FOR 31 TO 36 MONTHS.
30. WHAT WOULD BE YOUR MAIN REASON/CONSIDERATION IN DECIDING TO SEPARATE OR RETIRE RATHER THAN TO ACCEPT AN ASSIGNMENT SEPARATE FROM YOUR SPOUSE?
- A. N/A, WOULDN'T SEPARATE/RETIRE
 - B. DON'T WANT TO BE SEPARATED FROM SPOUSE OR CHILDREN
 - C. DON'T HAVE ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CARE OF CHILDREN
 - D. HAVE SPECIAL FAMILY CARE SITUATIONS (CHAPS, DEPENDENT DISABLED ADULT, ETC.)
 - E. WANT TO REMAIN IN A GEOGRAPHIC AREA
 - F. THE NON-CAREER-ENHANCING NATURE OF THE FUTURE JOB
 - G. CIVILIAN JOB OPPORTUNITIES
 - H. OTHER

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BELOW IS A LIST OF POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENT SITUATIONS. WHEN ANSWERING EACH QUESTION, ASSUME YOU AND YOUR SPOUSE ARE NOW ASSIGNED TOGETHER AND YOU ARE BOTH SELECTED FOR TOURS OF EQUAL LENGTH BUT IN DIFFERENT AREAS WHERE YOU COULD NOT LIVE TOGETHER. IF YOU WERE FACED WITH THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

31. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR 2 YRS OR LESS, I WOULD:

- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
- B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE
- C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
- D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
- E. DON'T KNOW

32. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR 2 YRS OR LESS, I WOULD:

- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
- B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE

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- C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
33. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED
A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR 2 YRS OR
LESS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE
 - C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
34. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB AND I RECEIVED A
LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR 2 YRS OR
LESS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE

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- C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
35. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED A
HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR MORE THAN 2
YEARS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE
 - C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR
NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
36. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED A
LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR MORE THAN
2 YRS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE

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- C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
37. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED
A HIGHLY DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR MORE THAN
2 YRS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE
 - C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR
NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE
AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
 - E. DON'T KNOW
38. IF MY SPOUSE RECEIVED A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB, AND I RECEIVED
A LESS THAN DESIRABLE JOB, AND BOTH ASSIGNMENTS WERE FOR MORE
THAN 2 YRS, I WOULD:
- A. TAKE THE ASSIGNMENT
 - B. RETIRE, IF ELIGIBLE

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- C. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, AND SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
- D. SEPARATE, IF ELIGIBLE, BUT NOT SEEK ASSIGNMENT WITH THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD OR AF RESERVE
- E. DON'T KNOW

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY.

*MR: Fast track survey effort for HQ USAF/MPZ.
Suspense for results is 1200 CST 28 Jan 85.*

*MPCYPS
H/LP 21 Jan 85
Q*

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APPENDIX B
CONTINGENCY TABLES

Question 31

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	62 16.89 36.69 46.62	107 29.16 63.31 45.73	169 46.05
Female	71 19.35 35.86 53.38	127 34.60 64.14 54.27	198 53.95
TOTAL	133 36.24	234 63.76	367 100.00

Question 32

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	100 27.25 59.17 43.86	69 18.80 40.80 49.64	169 46.05
Female	128 34.88 64.65 56.14	70 19.07 35.35 50.36	198 53.95
TOTAL	228 62.13	139 37.87	367 100.00

Question 33

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	60 16.35 35.50 47.62	109 29.70 64.50 45.23	169 46.05
Female	66 17.98 33.33 52.38	132 35.97 66.67 54.77	198 53.95
TOTAL	126 34.33	241 65.67	367 100.00

Question 34

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	115 31.34 68.05 46.75	54 14.71 31.95 44.63	169 46.05
Female	131 35.69 66.16 53.25	67 18.26 33.84 55.37	198 53.95
TOTAL	246 67.03	121 32.97	367 100.00

Question 35

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	85 23.16 50.30 42.29	84 22.89 49.70 50.60	169 46.05
Female	116 31.61 58.59 57.71	82 22.34 41.41 49.40	198 53.95
TOTAL	201 54.77	166 45.23	367 100.00

Question 36

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	120 32.70 71.01 44.44	49 13.35 28.99 50.52	169 46.05
Female	150 40.87 75.76 55.56	48 13.06 24.24 49.48	198 53.95
TOTAL	270 73.57	97 26.43	367 100.00

Question 37

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	82 22.34 48.52 44.57	87 23.71 51.48 47.54	169 46.05
Female	102 27.79 51.52 55.43	96 26.16 48.48 52.46	198 53.95
TOTAL	184 50.14	183 49.86	367 100.00

Question 38

Sex vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	121 32.97 71.60 43.84	48 13.08 28.40 52.75	169 46.05
Female	155 42.23 78.28 56.16	43 11.72 21.72 47.25	198 53.95
TOTAL	276 75.20	91 24.80	367 100.00

Question 31

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	79 21.53 36.74 59.40	136 37.06 63.26 58.12	215 58.58
Female	54 14.71 35.53 40.60	98 26.70 64.47 41.88	152 41.42
TOTAL	133 36.24	234 63.76	367 100.00

Question 32

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	139 37.87 64.65 60.96	76 20.71 35.35 54.68	215 58.58
Female	89 24.25 58.55 39.04	63 17.17 41.45 45.32	152 41.42
TOTAL	228 62.13	139 37.87	367 100.00

Question 33

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	73 19.89 33.95 57.94	142 38.69 66.05 58.92	215 58.58
Female	53 14.44 34.87 42.06	99 26.98 65.13 41.08	152 41.42
TOTAL	126 34.33	241 65.67	367 100.00

Question 34

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	153 41.69 71.16 62.20	62 16.89 28.84 51.24	215 58.58
Female	93 25.34 61.18 37.80	59 16.08 38.82 48.76	152 41.42
TOTAL	246 67.03	121 32.97	367 100.00

Question 35

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	120 32.70 55.81 59.70	95 25.89 44.19 57.23	215 58.58
Female	81 22.07 53.29 40.30	71 19.35 46.71 42.77	152 41.42
TOTAL	201 54.77	166 45.23	367 100.00

Question 36

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	161 43.87 74.88 59.63	54 14.71 25.12 55.67	215 58.58
Female	109 29.70 71.71 40.37	43 11.72 28.29 44.33	152 41.42
TOTAL	270 73.57	97 26.43	367 100.00

Question 37

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	102 27.79 47.44 55.43	113 30.79 52.56 61.75	215 58.58
Female	82 22.34 53.95 44.57	70 19.07 46.05 38.25	152 41.42
TOTAL	184 50.14	183 49.86	367 100.00

Question 38

Parental Status vs. Predicted Retention Decision

Frequency Percent Row PCT Col PCT	Leave AF	Stay in AF	TOTAL
Male	165 44.96 76.74 59.78	50 13.62 23.26 54.95	215 58.58
Female	111 30.25 73.03 40.22	41 11.17 26.97 45.05	152 41.42
TOTAL	276 75.20	91 24.80	367 100.00

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Form Approved
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2a. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY		3. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF REPORT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.	
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4. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S) AFIT/GSM/LSR/88S-8		5. MONITORING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER(S)	
5a. NAME OF PERFORMING ORGANIZATION School of Systems and Logistics	6b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable) AFIT/LSY	7a. NAME OF MONITORING ORGANIZATION	
6c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code) Air Force Institute of Technology (AU) Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio 45433-6583		7b. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)	
8a. NAME OF FUNDING/SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	8b. OFFICE SYMBOL (If applicable)	9. PROCUREMENT INSTRUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER	
8c. ADDRESS (City, State, and ZIP Code)		10. SOURCE OF FUNDING NUMBERS	
		PROGRAM ELEMENT NO.	PROJECT NO.
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11. TITLE (Include Security Classification) See Box 19			
12. PERSONAL AUTHOR(S) Carol P. Freniere, Capt, USAF			
13a. TYPE OF REPORT MS Thesis	13b. TIME COVERED FROM _____ TO _____	14. DATE OF REPORT (Year, Month, Day) 1988 September	15. PAGE COUNT 117
16. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTATION			
17. COSATI CODES		18. SUBJECT TERMS (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)	
FIELD	GROUP	SUB-GROUP	
05	09		
		Retention (General), Relocation, Marriage, <i>Theses</i> , Families (Human). <i>(JES)</i>	
19. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse if necessary and identify by block number)			
Title: POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF RELOCATION DECISIONS ON RETENTION OF AIR FORCE DUAL-OFFICER COUPLES			
Thesis Chairman: Guy S. Shane, PhD Associate Professor of Organizational Behavior and Management			
Approved for public release JAN APR 190-1.			
WILLIAM A. <i>Shane</i> 17 Oct 88 Associate Dean School of Systems and Logistics Air Force Institute of Technology (AU) Wright-Patterson AFB OH 45433			
20. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY OF ABSTRACT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED/UNLIMITED <input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS RPT. <input type="checkbox"/> DTIC USERS		21. ABSTRACT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED	
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This study investigated the predicted career decisions of Air Force dual-officer couples when faced with family separation. The number of office couples has risen dramatically in recent years and is expected to continue to rise. As such, the Air Force must be concerned with the effect of join-spouse policies on the retention of these couples. Career decisions were explored in terms of the following variables: sex and parental status of the respondent, length of family separation, and desirability of Air Force job offers.

The population of interest included all active duty Air Force captains and lieutenants, with spouses in the same categories. Frequencies of responses to biographical survey questions were used to compile descriptive information. Chi-square tests of independence were used to determine the relationship of sex and parental status to relocation decisions.

Results reveal a group of junior officers who have been successful with join-spouse assignments and express a high degree of career commitment. However, they also show a high degree of family commitment and are willing to accept very little family separation during their careers. In those cases in which family separation is necessary, length of separation and job desirability seem to influence retention decisions. In all scenarios presented, the decision of whether or not to leave the Air Force is independent of sex. In seven out of the eight scenarios, the decision is independent of parental status.

→ Based on the results, it was recommended that the Air Force continue its current emphasis on family issues (including those pertaining to military couples). It was also recommended that family separation be minimized and job desirability maximized when couples must be separated. → *key words*